JULY, 1923 VOLUME LVII, NO. 5

THE BOOKMAN

CHICAGO AND OUR NATIONAL GESTURE

By Kenneth Burke

TO be unmistakably American, a work of art must hitch up its trousers, shake frail gentlemen's hands with vigor, and wipe the stain of tobacco juice from its lips before speaking. Or, if you are less of the downright school and slightly more romantic, the unmistakable national masterpiece shows the gradual tightening of the muscles about the mouth as the bitter heavy rises to power and corruption. Again, there is the wide swing of the social writers, where great mountains of machinery and cataracts of pain-of-living tower threateningly above the palpitating ants. . . . The essential thing about a representative American masterpiece, therefore, is its thump of the fist, its broad stride, its gesture of strength.

All this, of course, is in keeping with the fact that we are now on the road to discovering our national contribution. And we are so busy finding truly representative authors, authors who express the essence, the distillation, of America, that we have entirely neglected the minor matter of whether there is anything exclusively American to represent, any American essence distinct from that of Europe.

The characteristic fallacy which our nationalists have made is their confusion between the pioneer spirit and the promise of a distinct national entity. That is, they have taken the unmistakably un-European qualities of a passing phase of our national life as the evidence of a unique contribution which we shall offer as a completely ripe nation. It is very much as though we were to see an evidence of the coming departure in architecture in the shacks which are hastily erected after a large fire. Such shacks would certainly produce a sight distinct enough from that of Berlin or Paris, or even London; and yet they would be no conclusive evidence of some germ in the minds of the builders, some independent cultural process which had now marked its first strides.

Yet this is exactly what is done in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the interpretation of the pioneer spirit in America. For entirely regardless of the possibility of America's having some distinct national art, even if we admit for the sake of the discussion that America is to produce an art which makes a clear break from that of Europe, I do not see how the prognostications of this art can be made from the facts of our pioneerism. Of course, if we were to be pioneers by temperament, there would be some justification for such a method. But if we were pioneers by temperament we should have passed on to China long ago, leaving this country to the Indians. And besides, to speak of being pioneers by temperament is like speaking of being restorers-after-a-fire by temperament.

Perhaps nearly a century too late, then, our nationalist critics have discovered the cry "Go West, young man!" As the country gradually increases its "permanency", the Europeanization of our inhabitants becomes more and more in evidence. New England was first to go. The same stigma has fallen upon New York. Whereupon, the belated ghosts of canvas covered wagons move over the Lincoln Highway and turn off toward Chicago. But unfortunately, even Chicago is at best a temporary stopping place. The cry is gradually arising against its Europeanization as well, and a prospective eye is being turned on New Orleans and San Francisco.

The difficult thing to understand is how our nationalists have persisted in trumpeting writers who are *echt Amerikanisch* in the face of this gradual retreat of Americanism. For a movement which keeps disappearing so rapidly could have nothing permanent about it. The pioneer spirit — or perhaps closer, the early settler spirit — which reached its most humorous expression in Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad", its most epic expression in the works of a man like Norris, and its most lyric expression in Whitman, has in fact already arrived at its height of fulfilment and can now attract only the epigones.

As it dies, we can expect these epigones to continue finding in such writers a guide to the future direction in which America is to develop. But guide or no guide, the country itself is developing entirely in accordance with its own possibilities, and these possibilities are almost exclusively European. As a consequence, the nationalists who are decrying New England and New York will shortly be decrying the middle west as well, and America will become damned as an ape of Europe.

Those who are so strong in affirming the rise of an exclusively representative literature have been hard put to situate this representativeness in anything but the mere choice of details. That is, if you speak of the boats on the Ohio, you are being a representative American, whereas if you speak of the boats on the Seine you have evidently spent too much time in New York. Write about a parlor with horsehair furniture, a family album, a sheaf of wheat on the wall . . . and you are fulfilling the highest possibilities of the unmistakable American, even though in the writing you do happen to utilize an art form — that is, the realistic novel — which was perfected in France before the Franco-Prussian war. This is exactly what our present un-European writers from the middle west are doing under the assumption that they are offering something distinct from Europe. Of course, if the national contribution lies in describing the Carnegie Library at Pittsburg in exactly the same man-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ner someone has described the Louvre in Paris, but in using the Library for a subject instead of the Louvre . . . then halleluiah! our national art is attained. I am reminded of those southern renaissances which keep turning up every three or four years, where a brand new southern movement is established by stories about cotton fields, these stories containing an abundance of negro dialect.

As a matter of fact, the one test of an individual contribution comes in the evolution of an art form. I situate the test of a people's contribution in forms because it seems imbecilic to suppose that a writer is showing any great virgin contribution in that he writes about Ohio because he grew up in Ohio, and especially if he writes about it in a method which was developed in France *to perfection* over fifty years ago. The final test that a Germanic Europe was fundamentally different from a Mediterranean Europe is to be found in such forms as Gothic, the sonata, the novel. Perhaps the finest instance of the significance of form is to be seen in the uta and hokku. An examination of such poems will show that their actual subject matter is practically the same as that of European poetry of the more standard variety. The peculiar effect obtained by these forms in transposing the emotions into miniature is the basis for the distinct contribution in such forms.

On the other hand, what distinctive forms have come out of America? The free verse movement sprang up over Europe and America simultaneously, which is another proof of our intimate connection with European thought currents. Indeed, the same phenomenon is found earlier in our literary history in the development of the short story. At the same time that this form was shaping itself quite spontaneously in America, a similar activity was going on independently in France. This should be much more convincing of our artistic interrelations than any conscious imitation could be.

The thing I cannot understand is why we should expect America to develop some distinctly un-European art expression. Fighting the same wars, selling the same goods, reading the same books, seeing the same plays, hearing the same music . . . it almost seems incredible that in the face of such a normal interchange there are critics who can go on trumpeting the birth of a new culture. Our republic is founded on political ideas developed in Europe; our whole tradition of expression is European; our people is composed almost entirely of European blood, for the two bloods which might have offered some rejuvenation — Indian and Negro — have had no opportunity to affect us in any deep seated manner because there has been no transfusion. Thus, the real possibilities which lay in the influx of a new blood have not been developed, and will not be developed. As to our language, after all has been said about its distinctness, it does not differ from that of England to anything like the degree which is found between High and Low German. French politics in Africa equals English politics in India, equals German politics in Russia, equals American politics in Haiti. Music hall is the moral equivalent of *variétés*, is the moral equivalent of vaudeville. The same compelling industrial problem is found in America as in Europe: namely, the necessity of foreign sales to insure full employment for the working classes at home. William James has admirers indifferently in Europe or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America; Bergson has detesters indifferently in America or Europe. Politically, economically, socially, racially, traditionally . . . in almost every consideration we are intimately linked up in the great thought currents of Europe. It is no mere accident of symbolism that the contours of the Monroe Doctrine have tended to blur.

As a projection of Europe, therefore, we can only develop concomitantly with Europe. Of course, we shall go on producing the individual genius — in fact, for those who insist on it, there is even the possibility of our gaining a monopoly on all the genius which European thought may still produce — but in any case it is hard to see what justification there could be for asking of us anything but a perpetuation of European culture. Indeed, so distinctly do we have the European frame of mind that we have the same "representative hero" behind our fiction, what Spengler has called the "metropolitan hero", the half-hero-half-villain, that is, who aspires to power, who represents some blind energy, some purposeless driving force. Even in so spontaneous a thing as the confession of our ambitions we evolve exactly as Europe.

And I can think of no one who is more strikingly European than Edgar Lee Masters, who has been looked upon both here and abroad as offering a distinctly American product. Of course, there is no Spoon River possible to any country but America . . . yet consider the basis of Masters's work: pale ambition, meanness through loss of illusion, death, decomposition, corruption — hardly an array of attributes which one would naturally expect of a brilliant rising civilization! Masters, in coming out of the heart of the middle west and receiving a general European recognition, simply demonstrated that he was one of the first men in the middle west who felt the skepticism of the older civilization creeping in to question the relics of the dying pioneers.

The chief objection to the doctrine of a national literature, therefore, would be that it tends to lead our authors into a set of prescribed grimaces. It prevents spontaneous development by prejudicing the artist into following paths which have been laid out for him. For along with the notion that an indigenous art is possible, there comes also the increasing insistence on certain gestures which must be repeated if one is to be counted among the hundred percenters. As might be expected, these gestures are coming in a general way to be imitative of Whitman, since Whitman was our greatest interpreter of the false pioneer promises. The general subconscious tenets implied in the judgment of an author as national have their basis, therefore, in Whitman. In a broad way, these Whitmanite qualities might be fixed as: (1) the prophet psychology, the feeling that the significant can be acquired only by means of the impromptu, the abandoned, the gush; (2) the epic spirit, the interpretation of the individual American as living in great turmoils because a catalogue of our activities as a whole shows that the sum total makes a great turmoil.

Under the prophet psychology would fall the nationalist's lurking respect for the box car education, the canal-boy-to-president conception of the making of an artist. The most dangerous feature of this doctrine, however, is the rhapsodism which it involves, the subconscious theory that art is a crude, haphazard affair, that one must make blind emotional stabs

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at his subject. Such words as *form* and *technique*, while still used now and then with glibness, have only the vaguest of meanings.

The second fallacy seems to exist purely by the failure to apply the spirit of pragmatism in forming judgment. (An exceptionally bewildering mistake on the part of the nationalists, since pragmatism has been so well nourished in America.) This particular fallacy seems to originate in a very interesting method of truth distortion employed again and again by Whitman. The accumulation of a mass of isolated details under one poem seems to gain for these details a sinister interrelation; thus, America acquires an aspect of massiveness which influences the interpretation of the individual, the individual being looked upon simply as the microcosm of this same massiveness. The fallacy seems to be apparent especially in a cataloguing of the speeding vehicles in our cities, resulting in the assumption that the individual American is consuming himself with restlessness. As a matter of fact, there is only one speed, and that is the speed of the athlete running; heretical as it may seem, if you put a man on the Chicago-New York Limited, let him be puffing a cigar and registering the lethargy of a big meal, while he sees a blurred landscape slip by through half closed eyes — heretical as it may seem, I say, this man is *not* speeding. And as to our grinding subways, they go tearing through the earth with a full cargo of the immovable.

And without Whitmanism, or the pioneer spirit, America has nothing but Europe, which is as it should be, since America is only a projection of Europe. And as to those who see in America the obligation of developing away from Europe, there would be as much justice in demanding that Europe develop away from America.

SLEEP SONG

By Louise Townsend Nicholl

NOW sleep run through your body
And sleep flood through your brain,
As tired lands are freshened
By sudden, quiet rain.

Let there be now no throbbing
Of ecstasy or pain.
Sleep shall come over your breathing
As shadow over grain.

So shall we find each other.
(Rain is more kind than sun.)
In the rain-soft depths of sleeping
Do spirits flow to one.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NOTE ON DEDICATIONS

By Carl Van Vechten

ANTOINE FURETIERE, writing in the seventeenth century, declared that the inventor of dedications must have been a beggar, a point of view which is echoed by Dr. Young in his "Universal Passion":

All other trades demand—verse-makers beg;
A dedication is a wooden leg.

That some truth hovers over this aspersion, at least in relation to the coevals of these gentlemen, there can be no denial. Records exist which seem to prove that dedications were bought and sold even in the old Roman days. Sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century inscriptions in books were almost invariably aimed at a patron's vanity, sometimes that of a noble lord, sometimes that of the king himself, and before the ink was dry on the page scribbled with fulsome flattery, frequently equivalent to canonization or coronation, the thrifty author or his agent had called at the door of the patron to collect a sum commensurate with the dignity conferred. No poet lifted himself above this custom, it would seem. John Dryden accepted his dedication fee with the graceful nonchalance of a barber of today accepting a vail.

There were, of course, certain ungrateful fellows who refused to pay for this costly privilege. Among these was the great Emperor Augustus, who was willing enough to send a purse to an author whose book had pleased him but who, upon receipt of a worthless book of which he had been made the official patron, substituted some verses of his own for the gold. For one patron, however, who set up his back against the flattery, there were a hundred who were delighted by it. Quite naturally, as a consequence, there were authors who made a business of writing books for the pleasure of catching such guileless fools. The practice of these blithe cheats is described in a chapter of Dekker's "O per se O" (1612). In the "Lettres Héroïques, aux Grands de l'Estat" by Rangouze (Paris, 1644) the pages were left unnumbered so that their order might be variously arranged in different copies and each person addressed might consider himself honored by being awarded first place. Thomas Jordan concocted an even more lucrative scheme. He prefixed flowery prefaces to his works, above which with a handpress he printed a new name in each copy. Half a century or so ago a Berlin sharper revived this device with success. Having compiled a scurvy history, he printed an edition of two thousand copies. Then, selecting from a directory the names of two thousand retired tradesmen, he wrote a dedication, altering the name of the patron in each copy, and when the book was ready sent the proper specimen to each of his victims. Most of these chuckleheads hastened to thank him with substantial checks for the trumpery eminence with which he had invested them.

There were others than Dekker who took pleasure in exposing the system,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for muckraking was not an entirely unknown pastime even in the days of Shakespeare. Witness, for a classic example, Thomas Gordon's anonymous "Dedication to a Great Man Concerning Dedications":

> I have known an author praise an Earl, for twenty pages together, though he knew nothing of him, but that he had money to spare. He made him wise, just, and religious for no reason in the world, but in hopes to find him charitable; and gave him a most bountiful heart, because he himself had a most empty stomach.

He goes on to make out an imaginary itemized bill for the good qualities bestowed on the patron.

Needless to say, however, there were some authors who, even at an epoch when it was considered no disgrace to call a man a hero for a few pieces of silver, used their dedicatory pages to better effect. I doubt if there could be found, if the complete history of dedications were to be compiled, one object, idea, animal, group of human beings, or profession which has escaped the honor. Everything has probably been thought of, so that an author of today who would dedicate his book in some new fashion is forced to invent a new play of words to express something that, perforce, has already been expressed in some form or other. In two respects, however, current dedications differ in a marked manner from those of a hundred or two hundred years ago; they are offered for value received, to pay a debt rather than to create one, and they are shorter. Instead of writing two or three pages of limpid and distinguished prose, our author now, in general at least, limits himself to a few lines. There are exceptions, naturally. Several books of Vernon Lee are headed by long dedicatory epistles and one of her volumes is really a dedication from the beginning to the end. Arthur Symons and George Moore, too, have sometimes taken occasion to be attractively garrulous in this form.

The most celebrated dedication in all literature is undoubtedly that which Thomas Thorpe prefixed to Shakespeare's Sonnets (1609):

TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .
THESE . INSUING . SONNETS .
MR. W.H. . ALL . HAPPINESSE .
AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .
PROMISED .
BY .
OUR . EVER-LIVING . POET .
WISHETH .
THE . WELL-WISHING .
ADVENTURER . IN .
SETTING .
FORTH .

The discussion that this innocent inscription has awakened might be bound, I fancy, in several thick tomes, for during the course of the centuries it has become a matter of some importance to discover the identity of Mr. W. H. All the Shakespearian commentators and a few others, notably Oscar Wilde, have tried their wits at solving this problem which still remains to be authoritatively and finally settled. There are modern authors, Edgar Saltus for one, who, whether through a feeling of discretion or in order to hatch another mystery for the benefit of posterity, have followed this famous example of blazoning in initials only.

Spanish and Italian poets frequently dedicated their books to the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and even to God himself. James I conformed to this custom when he consecrated his reply to the work of Conrad Vorstius on the nature and attributes of God, to Jesus, addressing the Savior of mankind in most familiar language. A more modern instance comes to mind: Yvette Guilbert dedicated her autobiographical "Struggles and Victories" to God

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and followed the dedication with a long epistle to Him.

There have been dedications to abstractions. Dr. Pinckard inscribed his "Notes on the West Indies" (1806) to Friendship:

> Looking round, as it is said authors are wont, for a great personage, to whose name I might dedicate my work, I have not found it possible to fix upon any one to whom I could with so much propriety consign it, as . . . to its Parent! Accept then, Benign Power! thine offspring; cherish it even as thou hast begotten it; and cause thy warmest influence ever to animate the heart of thy faithful and devoted servant,
> The Author.

Relations have always been among the most frequent recipients of complimentary inscriptions. Dedications to fathers, to mothers, to brothers and sisters, to sons and daughters, to aunts and uncles, even to grandparents and to cousins, abound in literature. One of the best of these, perhaps, is that which Alphonse Daudet devised to give a tone of morality to his "Sapho":

> Pour mes fils quand ils auront vingt ans.

But a Paris wag, not unjustifiably, altered this to read:

> Pour mes fils quand ils auront vingt francs.

An entire book might be written regarding dedications to wives, for it has long been the custom for the author, in an encomiastic address, to ascribe his success, or his potential success, to his wife's influence. A typical example is to be found in Coventry Patmore's "The Angel in the House":

> This Poem
> is inscribed
> to
> the memory of Her
> By whom and for whom I became a poet.

There have been writers who have inscribed *all* their books, or almost all, to their wives. Of these, Thomas A. Janvier comes readily to mind. I have seen only one of his books in which "To C. A. J." did not appear on the proper leaf. It is a pleasure to observe that some of our moderns are breaking away from this tendency to hail the wife as the seat of all inspirational power. George Creel, for instance, has caused to be printed on one of the first leaves of "Ireland's Fight for Freedom":

> To my wife
> BLANCHE BATES CREEL
> who has long begged me to give
> up controversy in favor of
> "nice, unargumentative things like books,"
> this volume is lovingly dedicated.

Lovingly, and somewhat ironically, it would seem. Francis Hackett has dedicated "The Invisible Censor":

> To
> my wife
> SIGNE TOKSVIG
> whose lack of interest
> in this book has been
> my constant desperation.

There have been dedications flavored with an air of mystery. The inscription in Lord Beaconsfield's "Vivian Grey" is a masterpiece in this respect:

> To
> The Best and Greatest of Men
> I dedicate these volumes.
> He, for whom it was intended, will accept
> and appreciate the compliment;
> Those, for whom it was not intended, will —
> do the same.

Kipling inscribed his "Plain Tales from the Hills":

> To
> The Wittiest Woman in India.

And James Huneker, his "Bedouins":

> A la très-belle, à la très-bonne, à la très-chère.

Did he mean Mary Garden?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many modern dedications are to friends to whom the author owes an obligation, literary or otherwise, or to some celebrated personage who may in some way feel an interest in the book. Thus other of Huneker's dedications are to Philip Hale, Richard Strauss, Remy de Gourmont, H. E. Krehbiel, his brother, John Francis Huneker, Georg Brandes, Frederick James Gregg, Rafael Joseffy, Henry T. Finck, Vance Thompson, and John Quinn.

Philip Moeller's graceful dedication to "Sophie" falls under this heading:

To
Carl Van Vechten
who first gave me the key to
Sophie's dressing room
and to
Emily Stevens
who was waiting when the
knob was turned.

This playwright's dedication to "Madame Sand" is in a similar charming vein:

To
Mrs. Fiske
for whom the play was written
and to
Arthur Hopkins
for whom I wrote the play.

Christopher Morley, in "Pipefuls", gives this theme a new variation:

This book is dedicated
to
three men
HULBERT FOOTNER
EUGENE SAXTON
WILLIAM ROSE BENET
Because if I mentioned only one
of them, I would have to
write books
to inscribe to the other two.

This frankness is delightful and rare. Others have indulged in multiple dedications without the explanation and possibly without the same reason. Pitts Sanborn, for instance, has inscribed his "Vie de Bordeaux" to seven of his friends. It was the custom of Donald Evans to inscribe each of his poems to a separate person, but in "Two Deaths in the Bronx" he lumped his honors together on the dedication page where no less than twenty-four names appear. The inscription in James Branch Cabell's "Figures of Earth" is also inclusive:

To six most gallant champions is dedicated this history of a champion: less to repay than to acknowledge large debts to each of them, collectively at outset, as thereafter seriatim.

On the half titles of each part appear the names: Sinclair Lewis, Wilson Follett, Louis Untermeyer, H. L. Mencken, Hugh Walpole, and Joseph Hergesheimer.

In other centuries there was a practical reason for this kind of performance. Each person mentioned could be depended upon to furnish the author with a little money. Fuller's "Church History" has twelve title pages, aside from the general one, with as many particular dedications, and fifty or sixty inscriptions addressed to benefactors. In 1663, Sir Balthasar Gerbier published a work entitled "Counsel and Advice to all Builders", with forty-one separate dedications to the Queen Mother, the Duke of York, Prince Rupert, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Clarendon, and a long list of nobility and gentry, ending with the "courteous reader", a frequent recipient of dedications even today. Each of the epistles in "La Libreria", Doni dedicated to a person whose name began with the first letter. The book is only twenty-five pages long but it allotted a fleeting immortality to twenty individuals. Books running to several volumes frequently had a new dedication in each volume.

Many authors have dedicated their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

works to nations. Ouida, for instance, in a spirit of gratitude toward that land where she had so many readers, inscribed her "Tricotrin" to the American People. Morrie Ryskind's dedication to "Unaccustomed as I Am" is in a slightly different spirit:

Dedicated to the Great American Democracy —may it bring me royalty.

Dedications to the class at which the book, in some sense at least, is aimed are among the most interesting. Such a one is Richard Brathwayte's curious inscription in his "Strappado for the Divell" (1615):

To all usurers, broakers, and promoters, sergeants, catch-poles, and regraters, ushers, panders, suburbes traders, cockneies that have manie fathers; ladies, monkies, parachitoes, marmosite and catomitoes, falls, high-tires and rebatoes, false-haires, periwigges, monchatoes, grave gregorians and shee-painters — send I greeting at adventures, and to all such as be evill, my Strappado for the Divell.

William Hornby's "Scourge of Drunkenness" is dedicated:

To all the impious and relentlesse-harted ruffians and roysters under Bacchus' regiment Cornu-apes wisheth remorse of conscience and more increase of grace.

In Hood's "Whims and Oddities" (1827), the poet rendered honor to the reviewers in the following terms:

What is a modern Poet's fate?
To write his thoughts upon a slate.
The critic spits on what is done, —
Gives it a wipe and all is gone.

"Jurgen", also, is dedicated to a critic but in a somewhat different spirit. Miss Nightingale dedicated her "Introductory Notes to Lying-In Institutions" (1871) to the Midwife Phænarate:

If I may dedicate, without "permission", these small "Notes" to the shade of Socrates' mother, may I likewise, without presumption, call to my help the questioning shade of her son, that I who write may have the spirit of questioning aright, and that those who read may learn not of me, but of themselves? And further has he not said: "The midwives are respectable women and have a character to lose."

The most ironic and terrible dedication — terrible in its implications — that I know, is Octave Mirbeau's inscription in his scorching masterpiece, "Le Jardin des Supplices":

Aux Prêtres, aux Soldats, aux Juges, aux Hommes,
qui éduquent, dirigent, gouvernent les hommes,
je dédie
ces pages de Meurtre et de Sang.

This, of course, is in the nature of an arraignment.

The dedication to Joseph Hergesheimer's "The Happy End", a collection of short stories from "The Saturday Evening Post", certainly belongs here:

These stories have but one purpose — to give pleasure; and they have been made into a book at the requests of those I have fortunately pleased. It is, therefore, to such friends of my writing that they are addressed and dedicated. However, this is not an effort to avoid my responsibility: but to whom? Not to critics, not to middlemen, nor the Academies of which I am so reprehensibly ignorant; not, certainly, to my neighbor. They brought me, in times of varying difficulty, food; and for that excellent reason I am forced to conclude that, then as now, I am responsible to my grocer.

And I think I could do no better than to conclude this group with James Huneker's dedication to "Painted Veils":

This Parable, with its notations and evocations of naked nerves and soul-states, is inscribed in all gratitude to the charming morganatic ladies, les belles impures, who make pleasanter this vale of tears for virile men. What shall it profit a woman if she saves her soul, but loseth love?

We must turn to Restoration drama for a parallel to this: Wycherley dedicated his "The Plain Dealer" (1677)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to a notorious procuress of Covent Garden, Mother Bennett, whom he addressed as "my Lady B——" in a coarse epistle six pages long.

The author is not always able to please the person whom he thinks to honor. Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, for instance, was greatly annoyed by Hayley's dedication to his "Philosophical, Historical and Moral Essay on Old Maids" (1785):

Dear Madam, — Permit me to pay my devotions to you, as the ancients did to their threefold Diana; and to reverence you in three distinct characters; as a Poet, as a Philosopher, and as an Old Maid. Although the latter may, in vulgar estimation, be held inferior to the two preceding, allow me to say, it is the dignity with which you support the last of these titles, that has chiefly made me wish you to appear as the Protectress of the little volumes, which I now have the honour to lay before you. Your virtues and your talents induce me to consider you as the President of the chaste community, whose interest I have endeavoured to promote in the following performance.

Thackeray dedicated "Pendennis" to Dr. John Elliotson, the physician who had saved his life, and there is at least one case on record of a theatrical press agent who received a dedication. It is a good one, too:

To
Scheherazade, Baron Munchausen,
Jacques Casanova
and
Glenmore Davis
These feeble attempts of fancy to
Rival fact are humbly
Dedicated.

This was Gelett Burgess's way of sending "Find the Woman" into the world.

Otway dedicated a book to his publisher, a custom which James Branch Cabell followed in "Beyond Life".

I suppose that hundreds of volumes have been inscribed to beloved animals. I recall at once the dedication to Ouida's "Puck", which is the autobiography of a dog:

To
A faithful friend
and
A gallant gentleman;
Sulla Felix.

Sulla was the Newfoundland given to Mlle. de la Ramée by Hamilton Hume shortly after the death of her Beausire, to whom she was greatly attached. Oliver Herford dedicated "A Kitten's Garden of Verses" to his celebrated Persian cat, Hafiz, and Agnes Repplier, "The Fireside Sphinx" to her Agrippina. W. L. George's Kallikrates shares with Mrs. George the dedication to "Blind Alley", and my own Feathers shares with Edna Kenton the dedication to my "The Tiger in the House".

Ouida's dedications were more frequently addressed to ladies of quality, like the following to "Ariadne", a good example of her dedicatory style:

À mon amie
DONNA ADA COLONNA
LA DUCHESSE DE CASTIGLIONE,
connue dans le marbre comme
"MARCELLO"
qui, à tout le charme de la femme, a su
réunir le force de l'art.

And while I am speaking of Ouida it may be well to set down the most charming dedication I know, which is that to Max Beerbohm's "More":

To
MLLE. DE LA RAMEE
with the author's compliments
and to
OUIDA
with his love.

Hogarth proposed to publish a history of the arts as a supplement to "The Analysis of Beauty" and he composed the following amusing dedication for it:

The No-Dedication; not dedicated to any

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prince in Christendom, for fear it might be thought an idle piece of arrogance; not dedicated to any man of quality, for fear it might be thought too assuming; not dedicated to any learned body of men, as either of the Universities or the Royal Society, for fear it might be thought an uncommon piece of vanity; nor dedicated to any particular friend, for fear of offending another; therefore dedicated to nobody; but for once we may suppose nobody to be everybody, as everybody is often said to be nobody, then this work is dedicated to everybody.

Henry James followed this principle quite literally. Not one of his novels or books of criticism or travel contains a dedication.

But perhaps the most amusing way of dedicating a book is to inscribe it to yourself, for do not all good writers write to please themselves? Colley Cibber's daughter, Charlotte Charke, dedicated her autobiography (1755) to herself. Earlier examples are those of Marston, the playwright, who dedicated his "The Scourge of Villanie":

To his most esteemed and beloved Selfe,
Dat Dedicatque,

and George Wither, who caused to be printed in the front of his "Abuses Stript and Whipt" (1628) the line:

To himselfe G. W. Wisheth all happinesse.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Babette Deutsch

THE April magazines offer few examples of sustained poetry. And these, unexpectedly enough, are in several instances long poems. Such is Dudley Poore's sequence, "Marigold Pendulum", in "The Dial", and again "Formation" by Frank Ernest Hill, appearing in "The Nation" for April 11. This piece, which does not lend itself to partial quotation, is one of those rare poems which take the aeroplane for a theme and handle it effectively. Aircraft appears to be too poetic a subject to be treated poetically. If Mr. Hill's stirring poem can only be quoted in its entirety, each fragment of Mr. Poore's challenges the next. I give part II, not because it is the best, but because it is perhaps the most concise bit of wizardry in his poem.

MARIGOLD PENDULUM

II

Will no one deliver me from the haunted
moon?
When I lie abed thinking chaste thoughts
she crosses the floor, slips under the sheet,
and cuddles her icy flank against mine.
If I move to another room she is there
before me.
If I flee to the other side of the house
she looks at me from a neighbour's window,
or stands on a rain barrel to wink at me.
Now I am always listening for her step.
On dark nights I fancy her hiding in the
garret.
In the cellar I look to find her flushed and
tipsy,
sitting cross-legged on a claret cask.
She is faithful as an unloved wife.
Once when her scattered hair lay on my
pillow
I threatened to kill her. In derision
she drew a cloud over her breasts
and hid in the water jug on my washstand.
My thirsty knife severed only a long tress.
For a week now I have not seen her.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One of these summer nights I must find the way
to slip a knotted cord under her ears.

Dudley Poore
—*The Dial*

Most of the haunting poems during April occur, as might possibly be expected, in "Poetry" and in an all-American number of "The Chapbook". The opening poem in the first mentioned is fairly typical, both in its arresting image and in its too facile conclusion, of what is discoverable in this month's magazines. But if its author is obviously somewhat lenient with himself, he has written a poem which contains two unforgetable lines.

MUNICH

For Thamar

The fountain falls from laughing mouth of stone
In crescent laughter through the scented gloom;
And from the corner of the curved lip
The drops like petals gather, fall, and slip
From carven leaf to leaf . . . I am alone
By the slim white unwitherable plume
The water flaunts against a deathless sky.
I, who found in immutability
A little music and a little laughter,
See there before me Beauty's strange hereafter —
The immortal ghost, too gay, too sad, to die.

H. Stuart
—*Poetry*

There are other interesting contributions by the same author, besides such pleasing verse as "A Young Boy", which just fails of sentimentality, by Jessica Nelson North, "Being Only A Dream" by Mary Austin, "The Young Bacchus" by John Crawford. The April "Poetry" contains, moreover, one of the most coherent and moving poems which John Gould Fletcher has made. "Prayers" is at once warmer and firmer than it is his wont to write.

As for the American number of "The Chapbook", which was edited at the request of Harold Munro by Alfred Kreymborg, it contains, besides some rather slight pieces by the ultra-moderns, several notable poems by the more staid of our poets. Edna Millay's "Never May the Fruit Be Plucked" is perhaps as good as any of her experiments with free verse, none of which seems to achieve the intensity of her lyrics. Louis Untermeyer is here with his characteristic "Five Trees", Wallace Stevens with his "Mandolin and Liqueurs", which grows on one with rereading, (and we rather fancy our own "Old Women"). The cool simple sufficiency of Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"* contrasts excellently with the voluptuous sculpture of Witter Bynner's "A New Mexican Portrait of Mabel Sterne".

A NEW MEXICAN PORTRAIT OF MABEL STERNE

Italian turnings, at the head and foot
Of a delicately fretted pallid lounge,
Still framing firmly in a slender frame
More colour than a little frame should bear;

Pillows of purple and of faded wine,
Still holding roundly at the head and foot
The loom of other places, other days,
Against a waterfall from Mexico:

A waterfall of rainbows joining earth
In two serapes — one above of rain,
And one below a blanket animate
With all the little arrow-shoots of earth,
Red earth and black and yellow earth and red
Pricked at the roots with undershoots again;

And then a shawl of more than Lupin blue,
With violating flowers that leap in loops,
Over a faint sobriety of gown
Edged with the arms and hands of Mabel Sterne:

True to themselves, in spite of silver bands
Which had been drummed from earth by Navahos;
Simple and calm, in spite of turquoise rings

*Quoted in the June BOOKMAN from "The New Republic", in which it appeared during March, and therefore not reprinted here.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And turquoise bracelets like a rich tattoo;

And then, above it all, that head of hers,
Those eagle eyebrows under peaceful sky:
That contemplative look, proportioning
Italian lounges to the universe. . . .

Witter Bynner
—*The Chapbook*

"Rhythmus" is distinguished by the contribution of Isidor Schneider, a young poet who is doing very quietly intense and serious work.

NILE

Civilization climbed you like a vine
Hanging you with cities like dark grapes
That all the races plucked for aeonal wine.
Beside you pause like petrified escapes
Of strangely sated insects that sucked here
The pyramids with rigid buried wings,
The Sphinx that watches the eternal fear
Of men who cope with their imaginings.

You gave it height and reach to strew its seed
Upon new rivers that are garlanded.
Therefore with plumper clustered vines that bleed
More copious under our naked tread
Your own is suffocate under the weed
Of conquest and drops down a withered head.

Isidor Schneider
—*Rhythmus*

Another good sonnet, in spite of the technical lapses and some facile phrases, is this one by Joseph Auslander, written on three rhymes. It appeared in "The New Republic" for April 18.

TO MY DESPOILER

Yes, you have taken everything from me:
Beauty and love and all the measureless
Impatience of proud April; even our sea
Shouting under the gulls; all loveliness
Of form and sound and color; all that we
Had touched; the curve of things we used to press
Glowing against our senses; mystery
And movement . . . everything taken . . . taken . . . Yes,
Even the little brave irrelevancies
Like brooding water, dripping water-cress,
The cool dark noise of cropping; cruising bees
On hot gold expeditions—even these
You took from me—Oh spare me your caress,
Leave me at least my own stark loneliness!

Joseph Auslander
—*The New Republic*

And finally, "Nomad" carries this lyric by a new writer.

WIND

Wind, why must you be tearing this black night
So that a little house shudders and creaks with dread?
There's a moan in the deep sky and a moan in a low room,-
— Proud lad he was and he not lifting his head.

Run to the hills, wind, your breath rough in the heather,
Why would you be flickering the candle with a poor lad lying!
Whip, an' you will, sleepy lake water
But take your fingers out o' the hair o' the dying.

Sweep down a sloping field and by crouching gorse,
The brown grouse will not care, nor start up in fright.
The smoke blows back and climbs to the rafters,
— O wind, wind, must you be rending this night!

Lillian Middleton
—*Nomad*

In addition to the poems quoted, there are several things either not so fine as their authors' names would warrant or simply of lesser distinction, which are yet worth attention. Among them are Edna Millay's "The Cairn" in "Harper's", Elinor Wylie's "Benvenuto's Valentine" and Anne Goodwin Winslow's "Choral", both in "The Yale Review", Joseph Auslander's "Haunted Solitude" in "The Atlantic Monthly", Maxwell Bodenheim's "Challenge" in "The Double Dealer", and the same ubiquitous poet's "Definitions" in "The Reviewer".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

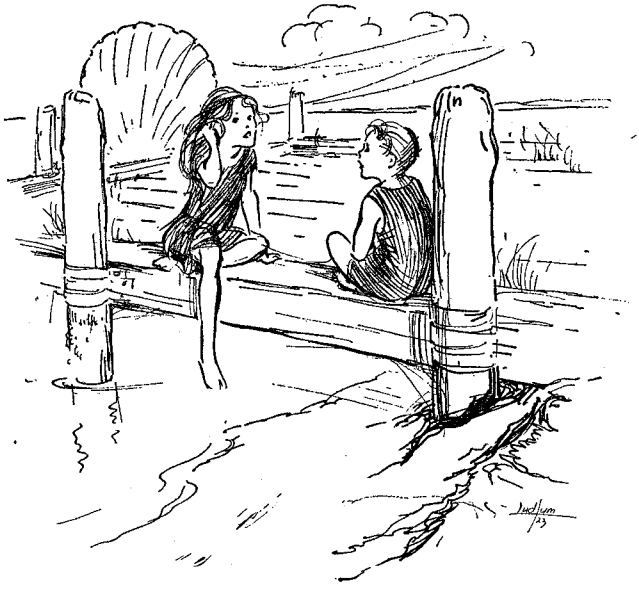
THE MAGIC SEA SHELL

*A Play for the Sea Shore**

By John Farrar

With Sketches by Mary M. Ludlum

CHARACTERS



THE BOY AND GIRL

ANNE — A girl of from twelve to sixteen years. She should be able to read well and to give life and vividness to her recital. Her part is, of course, very long, which means that she may have to read it, instead of memorizing it.

BOB — A boy of from eight to ten, preferably a good swimmer.

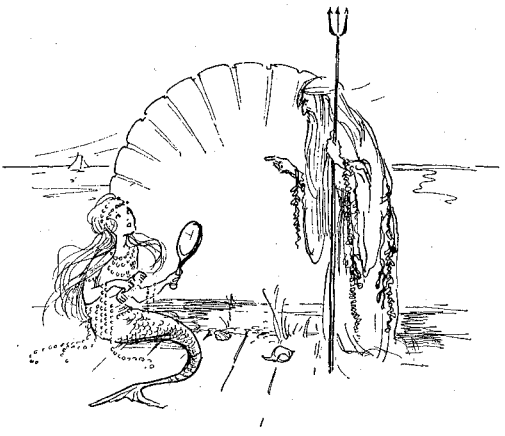
**Copyright 1923 by John Farrar. This play may be presented during the season of 1923 without charge, provided only that an account of its presentation be sent to* THE BOOKMAN. *Thereafter application must be made to the author, in care of* THE BOOKMAN.

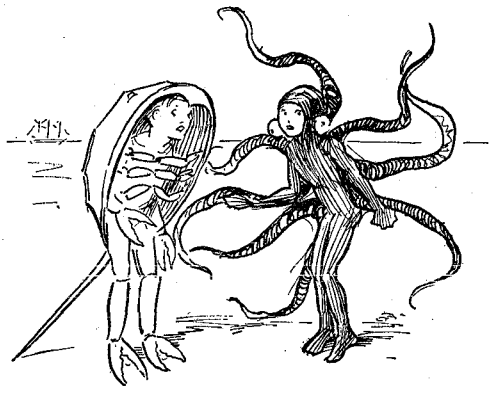
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE STORY PEOPLE

THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA — He is the conventional gentleman of the story books, with long hair, trident, and draperies of white stuffs and sea weeds.

THE MERMAID, HIS DAUGHTER — A beautiful maiden with long golden hair. She wears a tight green bodice, and a sheath of green and silver resembling a tail. She reclines most of the time, but her legs are free so that she can walk. She is covered with pearls, pearls in her hair, pearls hanging from her arms.





THE SAILOR BOY — Dressed in a white navy uniform.

THE OCTOPUS — A boy with a tight black suit and many wired and flopping tentacles which can be made to bob about by movements of the hands.

THE HORSESHOE CRAB — A small boy, whose back is covered by a large flat shell. He crawls on his hands and feet. When he does rise, the shell remains on his back, and his body is covered with wired legs.

THE SHARK — A fantastic representation of the monster. A long wired tail acts as the back of his coat. A fish head with sharp jaws and white teeth serves as hat.

THE FLYING FISH — From two to six boys. They are in varicolored tights. Their headdresses are fish heads. Their arms are covered with flowing muslins in the shape of fins.

THE SEA ANEMONES — From two to six girls in brightly colored dresses with wired petals sticking out from their waists.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SCENE: *A dock at the edge of a pool, lake, or on the sea shore. It is overgrown with weeds and sand flowers. The back drop for the play is the water. The audience sits above upon the beach.* THE STORY PEOPLE *are hidden under the edge of the dock and appear by climbing steps or a ladder. The play can be given quite as well indoors, or on a lawn, in the latter case by pretending that the grass is water. That's not too much to ask of friendly observers.* ANNE *and* BOB, *in bathing suits, are playing about among their friends of the audience. When it is time for the action to commence, they run down to the edge of the dock with shouts.*

ANNE

(Putting her toe in the water) Oo! It's cold!

BOB

You're afraid! You're afraid! Watch *me! (He dives from the dock.)*

ANNE

(Wading in a little way) I'm *not* afraid.

BOB

(Scrambling up onto the dock) See, Anne, what I've found. It's a beautiful shell.

ANNE

(Bending over) There's something written on it.

BOB

M — a — Oh, Anne, it says "Magic"!

ANNE

(Putting it to her ear) Sounds funny! It sounds like music and voices.

BOB

(Taking it as she offers it) Let me see if *I* can hear. *(He listens)* Naw! Guess it's for girls. You listen again.

*(*ANNE *sits down near the edge of the dock.* BOB *sits beside her. She puts the shell to her ear. As she does so, there is a burst of music, and at the end of the dock there is slowly raised a large hollow shell, forming an entrance for the characters, as in the old miracle plays.)*

ANNE

Bobby! it's true. It *is* a Magic Shell. It *is* singing. Do you hear? There is the sound of dancing, too. What does it say? Oh, Bobby, it says, "I am going to tell you, Anne, the story of 'The Mermaid and the Little Sailor Boy'." Once upon a time —

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOB

(Interrupting) You're pretending, Anne.

ANNE

(Crossly) Hush! You might break the spell! . . . Once upon a time there was a beautiful Mermaid, with long golden hair — (ANNE *speaks more slowly. As she does so,* THE MERMAID *enters through the shell. She carries a golden comb and a mirror and suits her actions to the slow reading of the story.*)* Yes, it was beautiful hair; but it was annoying. Every morning she arose very early before the lobsters had even thought of stirring their claws, and lifting her golden mirror in one hand and her golden comb in the other, she looked at herself, and said —

BOB

See, Anne, she's going to speak!

THE MERMAID

(As she combs her hair)

They tell me hair's a splendid thing,
They tell me mine's like gold,
They tell me ladies envy me,
The very young and old;

*

But in the early morning light,
When I arise at home,
And all the little snarls and curls
Go hunting for my comb,

I don't believe that hair's a prize,
A beauty or a joy,
Alas, it's hard to be a girl!
I wish I were a boy.

BOB

Aha! Sensible people, mermaids!

ANNE

Hush! . . . So the little Mermaid combed her hair. Every morning as she was performing her elaborate toilet, putting on her long strings of pearls and looking at herself, not once but again and again in her golden mirror, her father would come to speak with her. Her father was the Old Man of the Sea. (THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA *struts on.)* He was a proud fellow, was her

**From then on* THE STORY PEOPLE *adapt their pantomime to Anne's telling of the tale. When they can act as she talks, they do. When it is necessary for her to pause, she does, until the action indicated by her previous sentence is complete.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

father, and as proud of his own long beard as he was of his daughter's hair. Every day he walked to and fro, to and fro, along the bottom of the ocean, looking for troublesome blackguards at whom he could shake his fist; for he, you know, was the policeman of the sea. Haven't you ever heard him blow his whistle just before a storm? Every morning, shaking his finger strenuously, he would warn the little Mermaid against that wicked villain, the Shark. He would tell her never, never to open the door to strangers while he was gone, walking to and fro, to and fro, along the bottom of the ocean. Then he would kiss his daughter solemnly, first on one cheek, then on the other, and, shaking his finger one last time, go off to his daily task like any respectable father of a family.

BOB

Doesn't he look like Dad, though—just the way he shakes his finger.

ANNE

Do be quiet! . . . After her father had gone the little Mermaid was oh, so very sad. She folded her hands in her lap. She looked at herself in the mirror again. She folded her hands in her lap again. It was sad to be all alone. Suddenly she hid her head in her arms and started to cry. There came a knock at the door. She started. There was another knock. She arose from her reclining posture. Who could it be? Should she open the door? She pondered. How dull it was alone. She would open the door. *(Slowly and solemnly) She opened the door against her father's wishes. (Quickly and brightly)* Then *in* came a figure in a long silver cape. (THE SHARK *enters.)* It stood there, bowing and bowing and bowing. *(A pause. Then in tones of horror)* How could the poor little Mermaid know that the beautiful silver cloak hid the greatest villain in all the ocean kingdom. It was — *the Shark!*

BOB

How terrible! Let's warn her!

ANNE

You're always interrupting, silly. It would break the spell. . . . The Shark stood there saying a pleasant, "Good morning", and talking about the weather as if he were a very hero instead of a wretched villain. He told her, with his hand upon his heart, how much he admired her. This, he told her seven times, bowing, bowing, bowing, bowing, bowing, bowing, bowing! Then he bowed himself out, but not before he had told her that he would return shortly. *(A pause, and in tones of horror)* Alas, the poor little Mermaid! She did not know what was in store for her.

BOB

It seems to *me* that even though she *is* pretty, she's very very stupid.

ANNE

That's not polite.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOB

I'm sick of being polite to people just because they're girls.

ANNE

I suppose you *will* talk. . . . For a time the little Mermaid was gay. She waved her arms. She smiled. She waved her arms again. Then she heard another knock. This time she hurried to the door. In ran the Octopus. (THE OCTOPUS *comes running in.)* He rushed hither and thither, then he rushed hither and thither again. He put his hands to his head in despair. Then he raised his head and, giving the little Mermaid a pitiful look, said —

THE OCTOPUS

I'm an octopus, and really in distress,
You don't know how octopuses feel, I guess.
I don't like so many hands,
For no one understands
How to fit them in a jacket, suit, or dress.

There is only just one time when it's a treat
To have countless hands, or you can call them feet.
When I sit before a table
Piled with dinner, I am able
With the utmost greed, to seize the food, and eat!

BOB

That's what *I* call bad manners!

ANNE

I presume, sir, that octopuses are not *supposed* to have manners. Besides, the plural of octopus is octo*pi*.

BOB

The Octopus ought to know his own name! *He* said octo*puses!*

ANNE

He ought to know; but apparently he doesn't. *(Listening to the shell again)* The Octopus took out his red bandanna handkerchief from a secret pocket, wiped the tears from his eyes, and wrung the handkerchief violently, until there was a pool of water, salt water, too, before him on the floor. Then he besought the little Mermaid with agitated motions which he made with many of his feet to hide him. The Shark, he told her, was running wild through the ocean, looking for victims. Alas! How the Octopus trembled, as he thought he heard someone coming. The little Mermaid smiled sympathetically at him, patted him on the back and told him to stand quietly in a corner, where she had no doubt that he would be quite free from harm. He had no more than reached his corner when there came another knock at the door. Again, the little Mermaid rushed to open it. In crawled the Horseshoe Crab.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(THE HORSESHOE CRAB *enters.*) He, too, was trembling violently. He raised himself slowly on his hind claws and bowed. Wiping away a tear, then, he sank again to the floor. The little Mermaid wrung her hands. She would have liked to comfort him. After a moment, he arose and began to dance mournfully, first on one claw, then on the other. He looked so funny that the little Mermaid laughed. She tried to be polite; but he did appear ridiculous. He did not stop dancing but shook a claw at her reprovingly, as he said —

THE HORSESHOE CRAB

They say the lonely hermit crab
Is very melancholy;
But to claim that I'm not sadder
Is folly!

How very hard indeed I've tried
To romp with Jane or Molly,
But, alas, I fear I cannot
Be jolly!

BOB

Silly, I call him. Doesn't he even play baseball?

ANNE

Don't interrupt him. He's just a crab, and he's *really* having a fine time.

BOB

That's not what *I* call a fine time.

ANNE

Are *you* a crab? (BOB *jumps up. She motions him to be still.)* The little Mermaid patted the Horseshoe Crab's back again, and then again, and still again. Presently he confessed to her, waving his claws nervously, that he, too, was running away from the Shark. He doubled up his claws and assured her that in single combat he was unafraid of anyone. Nodding his head, however, he acknowledged that it would be wise for him to hide, so the little Mermaid carefully showed him just where to stand quietly in a corner opposite the one in which the Octopus was standing. No sooner was the Horseshoe Crab in his corner than there was a burst of music and, without waiting to knock, a company of gay Flying Fish fluttered in. (THE FLYING FISH *come in, dancing.)* They surrounded the little Mermaid, waving their fins at her, and dancing about her. After they had danced for a time they knelt in a circle around her, beseeching her to hide them from the Shark. Just as she raised one fair hand to address them, another strain of music sounded and a group of Sea Anemones tripped in, looking behind them in terror. (THE SEA ANEMONES *enter as indicated.)* When they saw the Flying Fish, they forgot their worries for a moment. They said "How do you do" and then danced. . . . As they finished dancing, the little Mermaid clapped her hands

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in joy. They then knelt in two circles about her, beseeching her to hide them from their terrible foe. Just as she was about to answer them, there appeared in the doorway, disguised in his silver cloak, the Shark himself. (THE SHARK *appears.)* As he said "Good morning, again!" the Mermaid waved her beautiful hand at him. The Shark, taking one look around, saw that he had been successful in his wicked plan. His victims were ready. "Aha!" he shouted. And, throwing off his cloak, he leaped toward the little Mermaid. There was noise and confusion. The Flying Fish and the Sea Anemones ran around and around in two circles. The Octopus tried to attack the Shark; but was thrown on the floor. The Horseshoe Crab ran toward the door. The Shark had the little Mermaid in his arms when there was a shout of "Hold there! Ship ahoy!" and the Sailor Boy, a bowie knife in his hand, stood at the door. *(Enter* THE SAILOR BOY.) Even the Shark was terrified. No one moved. The Sailor Boy addressed them in stern tones —

BOB

Don't you think he looks like me?

ANNE

Of course not, he's very good looking.

BOB

(Threatening) I'll —

ANNE

Hush!

THE SAILOR BOY

Oh, I am a jolly sailor boy,
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!
And here, I see there's a damsel needing me,
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!
So beware my knife, and run for your life,
For sailor boys don't tarry, when they fight or when they marry,
And I, as I said before,
When I first stepped through the door,
I am, I am,
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!
A jolly, jolly jolly,
A jolly, jolly jolly,

THE STORY PEOPLE

He's a jolly, jolly, jolly,
A jolly, jolly jolly,

THE SAILOR BOY

I'm a jolly sailor boy!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There was a shout of "Hold there! Ship ahoy!"

ANNE

Then the Sailor Boy leaped forward. He seized the Shark by his tail; but that villain lashed about desperately, first to one side, then to the other, while everyone else, including the little Mermaid, cowered in the corners, shrieking with terror. After a terrific struggle, the Sailor Boy put the Shark down upon the ground. He was just about to stab him with the bowie knife, when the little Mermaid ran forward. She asked the Shark if he would promise never to eat anything but vegetables again. He wept — and promised! So, taking him by the tail, the Sailor Boy dragged him to the door and put him out!

BOB

He should have killed him.

ANNE

You are a cruel boy.

BOB

So are sharks cruel.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ANNE

Never mind. This was a better shark than some I have known. . . . Then there followed much rejoicing and dancing. In the midst of which the Old Man of the Sea came home. The little Mermaid rushed to his arms. When he had heard the story, he clapped the Sailor Boy on the back and said, "Why don't you marry my daughter?" At this remark the Sailor Boy's face glowed and he danced a sailor's hornpipe. All joined in the dance. After they had made sufficiently merry, the Old Man of the Sea said, "We must to the minister — the wedding and no delay!" And all shouted, "The wedding and no delay!" Whereupon they all marched off to church to the well known strains of the wedding **march.**

(Exeunt THE STORY PEOPLE *through the shell. It disappears.* ANNE *and* BOB *are left, looking at the Magic Shell.)*

ANNE

Shall we keep it? It's magic, isn't it?

BOB

Naw! You made up all that silly story yourself.

ANNE

Didn't you see them?

BOB

Naw! I was only pretending.

ANNE

I guess you don't know *what* you see and what you don't see. *(She throws the Shell out into the water) There!**

BOB

Let's swim for it! *(They dive and swim out toward the open sea.)*

**The play may end here if the director chooses, with* ANNE *and* BOB *looking out after the Shell for a moment, then running back and joining the audience.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

The Return of Sentiment--"Lecture and Counter Lecture"--H. G. Wells and E. B. Osborn--The Story of the Sick Barrister--Lists of Favorite Books--"Guy Livingstone" and Its Author--Mackenzie as Editor--D. H. Lawrence's New Novel--A Collected Edition of Arthur Symons--Arthur Machen's New Book-- An English Edition of Edna Millay's Poems.

LONDON, *May* 1, 1923.

WE are now through the royal wedding, and can take an unprejudiced view of life once more. I must admit that I was astonished to see articles of a sentimental tone regarding royal weddings by several of our most intellectual young ladies. Possibly the tide has turned, and we really are in for that era of respectability and sentiment which has been prophesied by the far seeing for a year or two. Well, I am not surprised. But do not let it be supposed for one minute that the love of sentiment is a real emotion. It is only a fake emotion, much enjoyed by those who have the gift of creating it in themselves by artificial means, but of no permanence. It may be a fashion. It cannot last. We shall have to think of something to take its place before long, and I can only hope that the reaction may not be once again into that repellent austerity which has recently been so much admired.

* * * *

However, new ideas are to be welcomed, and it is a distinctly new idea to call a debate "a lecture and counter lecture" and then make it not a debate at all. The scheme has been started in London. The first "lecture and counter lecture" was upon the subject of the proper teaching of history, and it was between H. G. Wells and E. B. Osborn. The mind at this point should be carried back a few years to the publication of that remarkable book, "Boon", the authorship of which Mr. Wells has more recently acknowledged. "Boon" was enlivened with sketches by the author, and one or two of his most offensive drawings represented E. B. Osborn singing the Song of Hybreas the Cretan, or in other words celebrating, from the safe distance of middle age, the joys of war. There was thus a curious interest in the meeting of two men who have so little, one would think, in common. A debate between them would have had a strange, fanciful note of hostility. Well, it was not to be. There was no debate. Mr. Wells delivered a speech from rather hasty notes, expressing views which are by this time familiar to his admirers (and also to those splendid people who are moved to a frenzy of hostility by the name of Mr. Wells, on account of views which have been attributed to him from time to time by irresponsible journalists). Mr. Osborn read a carefully prepared paper. The speeches were about different things, and were not particularly controversial at that. They did not touch each other at any point. There was no discussion, and the audience missed all its expected fun. If these lectures, and there are to be a number of them, are not to be better

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stagemanaged, then they will fail in their object, which is to set in motion the minds of intelligent, but not especially well informed, people. That object is excellent, but it must be given a fair chance. Later "lectures and counter lectures" are to occur between St. John Ervine and C. B. Cochran, A. G. Gardiner and Philip Guedalla, etc. They promise most excellently, but only if there is some semblance of a debate. If the speakers come prepared to be provocative for a time, to answer each other in the same spirit, and to keep it up in several successive short speeches, there will be combat, and interest: if they are simply going to state their views irrespective of what has been said by the other lecturer, and are to be given no opportunity of refuting arguments and statements on the other side, what is gained? As far as I can see, nothing.

* * * *

In the case of the first meeting, probably those responsible for the series were not quite clear as to procedure. They will no doubt learn from experience. The notion of getting Mr. Wells and Mr. Osborn together was admirable, for no two men could be, one would think, more directly opposed to one another on every question, literary, historical, or political. Mr. Wells's views are — well, if they are not familiar to everybody, then Mr. Wells has failed in his great crusade. Mr. Osborn represents the attitude of the "Morning Post", of which paper he is literary editor. Now the "Morning Post" is a wild and headlong political organ of reaction. It is often brilliant, and generally well written. It is admitted to be the only paper in England which has for months past — one might say, for years — been giving the facts as to the present state of Ireland. Its honesty is above suspicion. And yet, although a brilliant partizan paper, it is not a good paper. It has more life in it than any daily in this country except the "Daily Express" and perhaps the "Daily Mail". But it has not the authority of a paper like the "Manchester Guardian", and it somehow tires those who take to it for a time. It is thus like a scented tobacco. I have heard many men say that it is the best paper in London; but within three months I have heard the same men say that they no longer see it. Yet I am assured that it is a paper which no politician can afford to miss. It has had political "scoops" in the past few years which have been unsurpassed by any paper but the "Daily Express". Its reviews, under the charge of Mr. Osborn, are also variable; but there is this to be said for them, that they are often outspoken in a way in which few newspapers permit themselves to be outspoken, and that political bias is not a feature of the majority. In a paper that is primarily a political paper, this is worthy of mention.

* * * *

I have heard a curious true story which, as it concerns books and is greatly to the credit of the intelligent young women who run the lending departments of our subscription libraries, I will repeat here. A certain famous barrister has recently been ill. He has been confined to bed. As a consequence, he has been bored. One would immediately say, if one knew no better, that being a barrister he must be a man to whom a few days alone with his books would be a source of delight. Not so. The only author whose works give this barrister any pleasure is E. Phillips Oppenheim, and these books he reads with the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

avidity which we all feel for the books of Mr. Oppenheim. But unfortunately the barrister has read them all to date. His wife, hoping against dread, went to the — well, to the particular library to which she subscribed. "Oh, *do* tell me that Oppenheim has written a new book this week!" she pleaded. The young woman at the counter shook her head. "He hasn't!" she announced. The poor barrister's wife, in despair, told the sad story of her husband's illness, his boredom, his refusal of any books other than those of Mr. Phillips Oppenheim. What was she to do? She implored aid. The young woman at the counter remained thoughtful for an instant. Then her face cleared. She became as one inspired. Diving into a secret cupboard, she, with all the assurance of a physician, produced a book. "This is the book for him," she cried. It was an English translation of "Les Contes Drolatiques". The barrister's life was saved. He was an ideal invalid until he recovered. Now, wasn't that true librarianship?

* * * *

Lists of great, famous, favorite, worst, and other books seem to retain their interest beyond all compare with those who need stimulants in the matter of literature, home and foreign. The North American Newspaper Alliance has recently requested a number of English and American writers to name the ten books which have given the said writers the greatest enjoyment in the course, I understand, of the lives of these writers. Of course, the question is one which it is next to impossible to answer. The book I enjoy today may bore me next week or next year. Mood, and variable intelligence, may have a great effect in deciding what we enjoy from hour to hour. I know one man who never dares reread a book he has loved, for fear the rereading may be a fiasco. He is a cowardly fellow, I suppose; but the feeling is like a superstition. Now I am always rereading books, good and bad. On an average, I should say that I read the entire works of Jane Austen once a year, and "Pride and Prejudice" and "Persuasion" two or three times. I constantly reread old romantic novels and the tales about Sherlock Holmes. I read Hazlitt's essays over and over again. Also "Wisden's Cricketers' Almanac", the novels of Fielding, several books by Dickens and Mark Twain, and the catalogues of the principal gramophone companies. But it would be hard to make a list of the books which have given me the greatest pleasure in the course of my life. I should have to begin, I fear, with "The Water Babies" of Charles Kingsley, though why this should be I am unable to say. I have never reread that work, and I fancy it was the first book I ever read. To proceed would be difficult. I have seen the lists, or a selection from them, of several men and women who were called upon to reply; and very curious they appear. Albert Payson Terhune selected, for example, "Guy Livingstone". He was asked whether he did not mean "Guy Mannering", and he replied that he meant "Guy Livingstone." Many people have not heard of "Guy Livingstone", as I find when I mention the book to my friends; and this is the more remarkable because it was the subject of one of the most ridiculous (and also one of the least exaggerated) parodies of Bret Harte. Harte called his version "Guy Heavystone".

"Guy Livingstone" is the best known work (the recently displayed ignorance of that book does not make me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feel very confident that the others are ever read) of George Alfred Lawrence, who was born in 1827 and who died in 1876. In all he wrote about a dozen books, all very masculine and full of outdoor sports. I cannot claim to have read them all, but in my youth I was acquainted with "Guy Livingstone" and "Breakspeare", a tale of the fourteenth century. The latter is not much of a book. It is diffuse and wandering; but it has a rough zest which is rather intriguing. The hero is a hero, but he is a "man's hero" of the bluff order. He is on the speechless side, and is not held up as a paragon of virtue. However, as the author remarks, in all his days of youthful hot blood he did nothing to rob a woman of her happiness, from which we may infer that he was no seducer of young virgins. His amour with a lady who lives in a castle, and who finally hands him over to the local clergy for torture, is fully described. It begins with an attack upon him by a jealous page, whom he throws out of the window — or rather, whatever was at that date the equivalent of a window. "Guy Livingstone" is in the same vein. The hero is thus described:

> He was about fifteen, but looked fully a year older, not only from his height, but from a disproportionate length of limb and development of muscle, which ripened later into the rarest union of activity and strength that I have ever known. His features were very dark and pale, too strongly marked to be called handsome; about the lips and lower jaw especially there was a set sternness that one seldom sees before the beard is grown. The eyes were very dark grey, nearly black, and so deeply set under the thick eyebrows that they looked smaller than they really were; and I remember, even at that early age, their expression, when angered, was anything but pleasant to meet. His dress was well adapted for displaying his deep square chest and sinewy arms — a close-fitting jersey, and white trousers girt by a broad black belt; the cap, orange velvet, fronted with a silver Maltese cross.

To this description, I seem to remember, Bret Harte added only a bit between the hero's teeth. When I add that the title of the book is "Guy Livingstone; or Thorough", I have sufficiently indicated its character. On the whole the claim that Livingstone was the legitimate sire of every Ouida hero is justified. There is a brutality about him which would delight many of the popular and sadistic women novelists of our own day. I am astonished that this book should have fallen into neglect.

Another book of Lawrence's which should have some interest is "Silverland". This is not a novel, but a book of American travel pictures. Upon its publication in 1873 it was described by the English "Athenæum" as "not only the worst book about America that we have read, but also one of the most reprehensible productions that ever came from the pen of a known writer". I have not read "Silverland", and do not propose to do so; but from a casual glance through its pages I do not notice anything of a very criminal character. There is a portrait of Ulysses Grant which is anything but flattering, and there is a severe attack upon Vanderbilt which possibly was too outspoken for the "Athenæum" reviewer. The picture of Grant is as a "small, undersized man, with wan face and weary eyes, *pékin* from head to heel, and palpably not quite at his ease. . . . He spoke in a shy, subdued voice — rather hesitated over each successive formula of greeting — and then paused, as if waiting for a conversational lead." Nothing very reprehensible there, you would think, although the description is far from cordial. But there may be worse in the pages I have not examined. The book is bluff, consciously manly, as of one who thinks his fishing and hunt-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing are the real things of life, and who condescends to the pen. There are some, however, who like the type, and for those it would be worth while to revive at least the classic "Guy Livingstone".

* * * *

That "Laird of the (Channel) Isles", Compton Mackenzie, has a new activity. Finding, as all who leave cities and go to live remote have found, that the chief lack in solitude is music, he has taken to the gramophone. He has done this on the true Mackenzie scale, for whatever Mackenzie undertakes assumes the utmost magnitude as his eager and enthusiastic mind seizes upon the possibilities of a situation. He now has the largest collection of gramophone records owned by any single person in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands annexed thereunto. He has sixteen hundred gramophone records. He can at any time hear the world's operas, symphonies, chamber music, ballads, masses, and nursery rhymes by getting somebody to turn a handle and change a needle. And, not content with this, he is going to start a magazine especially for the delectation of gramophone lovers. It is in train, and Mackenzie is doing it himself. He is not acting on behalf of any of the manufacturers. Therefore, the paper should be unbiased and evangelical. Besides writing for his own paper, and arranging the details of its publication, Mackenzie has written a new novel, which I believe Cassells are to publish here, entitled "The Old Man of the Sea". This is the story of a treasure hunt in the South Seas, and as the subject is one after the author's heart, I think the book should bring joy into many homes. Romance is what we all need in our fiction, and Mackenzie is one of the few among our young writers who have the gift of being romantic upon paper. I look forward to "The Old Man of the Sea" with considerable eagerness.

* * * *

D. H. Lawrence, also, has a new novel which is to be published in the autumn. This is the fruit of his recent travels to the Antipodes. The scene is laid entirely in Australia, and the title of the book is "The Kangaroo". Lawrence's book of Italian travel, "Sea and Sardinia", is out here, and is popular. Coming on top of "The Ladybird" (published in America under the title of the story which in the English edition is placed third, "The Captain's Doll"), "Sea and Sardinia" is doing a great deal to make Lawrence's position with the literati unassailable. A few years ago, they were defensive, angered, uncertain. Now all is roses and satisfaction. There was never such a writer. We are having a burst of enthusiasm of a rare kind. It is all very good, because Lawrence's talent, which seems to me to amount to genius, is of a kind which can reach a wide audience only by means of an appeal on the part of critics to intellectual snobbery. Otherwise most uninformed readers would regard Lawrence as tiresomely sickening in his insistence upon the sexual functions of human beings.

* * * *

I am told that there is a prospect of another "Collected Edition" — this time of the works of Arthur Symons. It would be a good notion. Symons has dropped out a little, but in his day, which was before the war and to some extent before the end of the nineteenth century, he was a writer of considerable importance. It may be said, perhaps, that he was a leader of that band of men who did so much

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to make "Yellow Bookery" a force. His poems, in spite of a despairing attempt at decadence, were always better than decadent. He has been a real poet. And his critical and "atmospheric" essays have a quality which is peculiar and unforgetable. I do not know whether the critical essays which were collected under the title of "Studies in Prose and Verse" retain their convincingness, but when that book was published, about 1905, it made a deep impression upon me. There was a remarkable essay on Balzac, for example, and another, which had given great offense to the subject of it, showing that Meredith was a poet and not a novelist at all. The mere fact that this essay was then regarded as revolutionary shows how far we have traveled since the book was published. Arthur Symons's suggestion would not now create any disturbance. I fancy it was much discussed at the time. Another book which had genuine vogue in those days was a collection of essays, to which the adjective (a loathsome one) Pateresque was applied, published under the title of "Cities". In this were grouped very carefully and even beautifully wrought studies of the author's emotions at the contemplation of famous cities, many of them Italian, which he had visited in the course of æsthetic voyagings. Symons was interested in literature, in art, in architecture, only as these arts moved him. His was a fastidiously temperamental response, and his essays were the echo of his response. They were excellent. They no doubt still are excellent. If I seem to hesitate about their author it is because, unkindly enough, I feel he has outlived his own age. One thinks of him in company with Beardsley, with Crackanthorpe, with Ernest Dowson; and the names of these men take us back to the 'nineties and have nothing, apparently, to do with our own day. And yet Symons cannot be a very old man, even now. I used at one time to see him, not as an intimate, but very obscurely in the course of business, and I remember how little he had the air of febrile emotion which his poems suggest. He was a slim and attractive figure, rather self-consciously dignified, very quiet, with a delicate face which was less white close at hand than it seemed at a short distance, and noticeably long white hands. He had in those days a slight, drooping mustache (he now wears a beard), and was always dressed with extreme care. He wore a black soft felt hat at a time when few other men were wearing such things. It made him, in my eyes, a melancholy and distinguished figure, even a funereal one.

* * * *

Another survival of older days, who is just now receiving more attention both from bibliophiles and the populace than he has ever previously enjoyed, is Arthur Machen. I mentioned the other month that there was to be a collected edition of his books, and I believe this is now on the market. In addition to this, however, there is no doubt that Machen has begun to write again, warmed to the act most likely by the sense that men and women are really desirous of reading what at heart he has always wished to say. Those who read "Things Near and Far" will remember Machen's deep love for the romantic beauties of the London streets. Old buildings brought up the writer of that book with a sense of awe. He paused, and spoke of them with reverence. Once a friend took him for a short walk with the pride of a collector. "I think", said he, "that I can show you something that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you will like." And Machen adds:

> He led me round corner after corner, by turns and ways that became more and more obscure. Then, elated, he said: "There!"
> In the by-street I saw a queer house, standing in a sunken yard away from the pavement. It was painted in cream colour, and grotesque heads, intended to be mediæval, were peppered over its frontage. I knew it well.
> "I never expected to see that again," I said. "I thought it would have been pulled down long ago; like the 'Rows' that once led from Great Coram Street. And, unless I am mistaken, we shall find Hebrew letters incribed on plaster shields applied to the house front."

And so on — the authentic touch of the romantic author of "The Three Impostors". It is good news, therefore, that Machen is writing a book called "The London Adventure", which is not fiction, but which tells of his wanderings in the more obscure districts of London, and of the beauties and strange things which he has found in these mean streets and magic corners.

* * * *

Martin Secker tells me that, following upon his charming little issues here of several volumes of Conrad Aiken's poetry, and the anthology of American verse which he has published under Conrad Aiken's editorship, he is to undertake the first presentation of Edna St. Vincent Millay's poetry in this country. The book, which will be published in the autumn, will contain all that Miss Millay has yet written in verse. I can imagine, therefore, that it will be much prized by American as well as English readers. I hope the fact is not ignored that English enterprise in the matter of American authors is increasing. It is no longer applied to non-copyright works or the more sugary novels of the great "uplift" market, but is showing concern with the good goods. Even if tardy, this is a step in the right direction, for there cannot be proper understanding between the two countries until the best that is available in each of them is also brought to the notice of readers in the other. Apropos, I see that Grant Richards has published an English edition of Ludwig Lewisohn's "Up Stream".

SIMON PURE

OR?

By David Daca

A CURIOUS Moorish artizan impulsively
Dipped his gold bell new wrought
Into clinging mercury.
When out again, all greywhite filmed
The delicate shell shone tawdry;
But the voice held golden.

See my new bell updrawn from life's quicksilver.
Behold it. Ring it.
Tin, or gold? Tin, or gold? Tin, or gold?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WALTER DE LA MARE: POET OF TISHNAR

By Llewellyn Jones

WALTER DE LA MARE has been an easy subject for reviewers. They tell us that he is the poet of one mood, that he deals in "white magic" — whatever that may be — and they lay especial stress upon his child poems. Here there is a permissible variation. If the reviewer is an unmarried youth he always adds that the child rhymes are too good for children — that only older people will appreciate them. But if he is a father he tries the poems out on his own children and does not make any such absurd statement.

Of these rhymes for and about children the greater number and the best will be found in "Peacock Pie" — included in the two volume collection of Mr. de la Mare's poetry published in 1920. A number not included in that book will be found in the book of Pamela Bianco's drawings, "Flora", for which Mr. de la Mare wrote poems illustrating the drawings — thus reversing the usual order. The poems of both books which are more especially for children have been collected, together with a few new poems, in "Down - Adown - Derry", published a year ago with drawings by Dorothy Lathrop, who also illustrated Mr. de la Mare's "The Three Mulla-Mulgars". And now comes the new edition of "A Child's Day" (first published in England in 1912), with illustrations by Winifred Bromhall.

Miss Bianco's drawings — exhibited when she was twelve years old — have inspired Mr. de la Mare — over forty and with children older than Pamela — to poetry that will appeal not only to other children Pamela's age but to their elders as well. Such stanzas as:

Suppose and suppose, when the gentle star
of evening
Came crinkling into the blue
A magical castle we saw in the air, like a
cloud of moonlight
As onward we flew.

—although perhaps few children would stop to envy, as another poet might, the happiness of "crinkle". Miss Bianco's drawing of a little girl entitled "Divine Delight" has moved Mr. de la Mare to the following reflection, a far from childlike one:

Dark, dark this mind, if ever in vain it rove
The face of man in search of hope and love;
Or, turning inward from earth's sun and
moon,
Spin in cold solitude thought's mazed cocoon.
Fresh hang Time's branches. Hollow in
space out-cry
The grave-toned trumpets of Eternity.
World of divine delight! heart whispereth
Though all its all lie but 'twixt birth and
death.

Though it is called a collection of "fairy poems" the selection in "Down-Adown-Derry" exhibits more than one side of Mr. de la Mare's genius. "Sam's Three Wishes; or Life's Little Whirligig" is a humorous rendering of Nietzsche's Eternal Return—achieved, however, by an old farmer who innocently wished that his youth might come back. On the other hand we have such a gravely beautiful poem as "The Sunken Garden":

Speak not — whisper not;
Here bloweth thyme and bergamot;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Softly on the evening hour,
Secret herbs their spices shower.
Dark-spiked rosemary and myrrh,
Lean-stalked purple lavender;
Hides within her bosom, too,
All her sorrows, bitter rue.
Breathe not — trespass not;
Of this green and darkling spot,
Latticed from the moon's beams,
Perchance a distant dreamer dreams:
Perchance upon its darkening air,
The unseen ghosts of children fare,
Faintly swinging, sway and sweep,
Like lovely sea-flowers in its deep;
While, unmoved, to watch and ward,
Amid its gloomed and daisied sward,
Stands with bowed and dewy head
That one little leaden Lad.

The rather common mistake, in this country at least, of calling Mr. de la Mare a Georgian poet may sidetrack readers who do not know his work well. His first book, "Songs of Childhood", was written in 1902, and even his best known work, "The Listeners", came out in 1912 before the label "Georgian" had been thought of. And of course he has written as much prose as he has verse: "Henry Brocken", 1904; "The Three Mulla-Mulgars", 1910, printed in America with illustrations by Dorothy Lathrop, 1919; "The Return", a novel which won the Polignac Prize in 1911 or 1912, reissued in America in 1922; while his greatest prose work, "The Memoirs of a Midget", was one of the outstanding books of 1922. He has also written a critical brochure, "Rupert Brooke and the Intellectual Imagination".

We shall return to these books later, but meanwhile merely note how unfair it is to call the author of such a list of works the poet of a single mood. He has, indeed, a special territory and it is that of Tishnar. And as this country has been inadequately mapped we must refer the reader to "The Three Mulla-Mulgars". In a footnote in that book Mr. de la Mare explains Tishnar:

Tishnar is a very ancient word in Munza, and means that which cannot be thought about in words, or told, or expressed. So all the wonderful, secret, and quiet world beyond the Mulgars' lives is Tishnar — winds and stars, too, the endless sea and the endless unknown.

In this particular book — the adventures of three mulla-mulgars, monkeys of a royal breed who are traversing the jungle to find their hereditary country, the word is used in a more restricted sense than that given above. But in its wider sense it is Mr. de la Mare's own "Arabia Deserta" which he alone has mapped. His preoccupation with it is given us in many of his most musical poems, such as "Arabia":

Far are the shades of Arabia
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart when out of dreams
I still in the thin, clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me — her lutes and her forests;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me:
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say —
"He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away."

The beauty of that poem speaks for itself. Its actual music is new — and the Georgians have recognized the beauty of Mr. de la Mare's rhythmical effects and have occasionally tried to imitate them. But they are of a sort that is especially hard to imitate. Any reader who already possesses the two volumes of collected poems and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the later collection, "The Veil", could suggest poem after poem that might be quoted here. "The Listeners" I should never think of quoting because anyone who knows anything at all about contemporary poetry knows it and knows that it is one of the best poems of its kind written in England for the last fifty years — indeed it belongs with "Kubla Khan" and "Christabel".

But here is a little poem much less known which perhaps shows that Mr. de la Mare is as far from being an imagist as one could be:

They told me Pan was dead, but I
    Oft marveled who it was that sang
Down the green valleys languidly
    Where the grey elder thickets hang.

Sometimes I thought it was a bird
    My soul had charged with sorcery;
Sometimes it seemed my own heart heard
    Inland the sorrow of the sea.

But even where the primrose sets
    The seal of its pale loveliness,
I found amid the violets
    Tears of an antique bitterness.

Ask any poet what he would give to achieve such a last line as that, and if he be a real poet he will answer you, five years of his life.

We have already in quoting "They Told Me" passed from the mood of Arabia into a more open air mood, and as so much has been made of Mr. de la Mare's adventures on the psychic borderland I am anxious to call attention to achievement of a different order. He is not only an emotional writer but a shrewd writer, and he has attempted something unique in poetic character painting. This is no less than a series of short blank verse "Characters from Shakespeare". That was a large order. We know what critics do to Shakespeare's characters, and we know that it is so difficult to do that they have even called in psychoanalysis to help them. To criticize Shakespeare according to Croce's idea of criticism — which is recreation — is more difficult still. Mr. de la Mare has not only attempted that but he has put his recreations into poetical form: that is to say he tries to meet Shakespeare not partly on his own ground as the Crocean critic would, but wholly on it. I think that these poems have not had anything like the notice they deserve. Here is one of them — to take a well known character:

Umbrageous cedars murmuring symphonies
Stooped in late twilight o'er dark Denmark's
    Prince:
He sat, his eyes companioned with dream —
Lustrous large eyes that held the world in
    view
As some entrancèd child's a puppet show.
Darkness gave birth to the all-trembling
    stars,
And a far roar of long-drawn cataracts,
Flooded immeasurable night with sound.
He sat so still, his very thoughts took wing,
And, highest Ariels, the stillness haunted
With midge-like measures; but, at last, even
    they
Sank 'neath the influences of his night.
The sweet dust shed faint perfume in the
    gloom;
Through all wild space the stars' bright
    arrows fell
On the lone Prince — the troubled son of
    man —
On Time's dark waters in unearthly trouble:
Then, as the roar increased, and one fair
    tower
Of cloud took sky and stars with majesty,
He rose, his face a parchment of old age,
Sorrow hath scribbled o'er and o'er and o'er.

And, for shrewdness, we have Polonius:

There haunts in Time's bare house an active
    ghost
Enamoured of his name, Polonius.
He moves small fingers much, and all his
    speech
Is like a sampler of precisest words,
Set in the pattern of a simpleton. . . .

While the pathos of Hamlet is matched by that of Ophelia, with her last decision:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Better the glassy horror of the stream.

This clairvoyant ability to see wholly and walk around the characters created by other men informs the only prose work of Mr. de la Mare that has not been reprinted recently, "Henry Brocken". If any American publisher wishes to set an illustrator a task that can succeed only by some special grace, and reissue that book, he will be doing a service to every lover of literature — indeed he might well dispense with the illustrations.

Every imaginative reader enjoys a creative work for itself and then extends the figures in it or tries to get behind them. He thinks of something the poet or dramatist might have told us but did not. In "Henry Brocken" Mr. de la Mare does just that, but not as the casual reader would. He does it with a creative imagination which meets the first author more or less on his own ground. The framework of the story is this: An imaginative boy is brought up in solitude, in an old country house. In its library he reads all the imaginative triumphs of English literature. And a great itch to travel comes upon him:

> But whither?
> Now it seemed clear to me after long brooding and musing that however beautiful were these regions of which I never wearied to read, and however wild and faithful and strange and lovely the people of the books, somewhere the former must remain yet, somewhere in immortality serene, dwell they whom so many had spent life dreaming and writing about.

And one day, mounting upon a horse that comes he knows not whence, this youth rides off and visits, like Tom o' Bedlam, whose lines preface the book, the regions of which he had dreamed.

The book is written in a very beautiful poetic prose — numerous prose, the grammarians would call it — and while it might be called a *tour de force*, it is an indubitably successful one. There is for instance the youth's meeting with the physician from "Macbeth". You remember the doctor in the fifth act of the play, who hears and sees Lady Macbeth as she walks in her sleep and tries to wash away the stains of Duncan's blood. This doctor is living eternally with his viol and his old songs. His visitor asks him about the tragedy, and we have in his answer a hint of a new view of the matter, as if, watching again the play from "in front", we could suddenly transport ourselves to another vantage point and see otherwise hidden expressions upon the faces of the characters. The effect cannot be reproduced here — and a very real effect it is — but we may quote a few of the introductory words to it, simply to exhibit Mr. de la Mare's glowing style in this book. This is the morning on which the wanderer, after sleeping in an old graveyard, meets the physician:

> Surely some hueless poppy blossomed in the darkness of those ruins, or the soulless ashes of the dead breathe out a drowsy influence. Never have I slept so heavily, yet perhaps never beneath so cold a tester. Sunbeams streaming between the crests of the cypress awoke me. I leapt up as if a hundred sentinels had shouted — where none kept visible watch.
> An odour of a languid sweetness pervaded the air. There was no wind to stir the dew-besprinkled trees. The old, scarred gravestones stood in a thick sunshine, afloat with bees. But Rosinante had preferred to survey sunshine out of shade. In lush grass I found her, the picture of age, foot crook'd and head dejected.

The book is out of print, but that does not really matter to its predestined reader, who can easily get it by calling upon the aid of any dealer in first editions. My own copy, in a little worse than "fair" condition, cost only four dollars, and I have seen better

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ones at six — but some day the book will join, in price, the other early books of its author which now hover around the twenty dollar mark.

As it is so much better known little need be said here of the "Memoirs of a Midget". This is Mr. de la Mare's masterpiece in prose and undoubtedly one of the permanent contributions of the twentieth century to English literature. It is the story of a woman midget, told from within. Of good family and with a soul as sensitive as one might imagine from her size and her heredity, she lives a life of intense imagination as a child, in a garden that to her is an adventurous wilderness, and in her grown up years has to face that wilder wilderness of human beings. In this book Mr. de la Mare is at once the poet of childhood and gardens and the realist who can depict with cruel accuracy the weak and the wicked.

But I have tried in the foregoing notes to call attention rather to the less known than to the better known aspects of Mr. de la Mare's genius. Of his poems many critics have spoken. It is no exaggeration to say that he stands alone among present day English poets. And it is wrong to regard him merely as a minor poet writing disconnected lyrics. His poems taken as a whole cover a high and connected terrain. His Tishnar is a country in which we may all recognize claims which we, too, have tried to stake out. It is a country of indefinable but nevertheless real mental states — a beyond that is within. And Mr. de la Mare is a philosopher with a categorical imperative for us. It is:

> Look thy last on all things lovely,
> Every hour. Let no night
> Seal thy sense in deathly slumber
> Till to delight
> Thou have paid thy utmost blessings;
> Since that all things thou wouldst praise
> Beauty took from those who loved them
> In other days.

Bibliography

Songs of Childhood. (Under the pseudonym Walter Ramal.) London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902. New edition in Longmans' Pocket Library, 1916.

Henry Brocken. (Under the pseudonym Walter Ramal.) London: John Murray, 1904.

Poems. London: John Murray, 1906.

The Return. London: Edward Arnold, 1910; W. Collins Sons and Co., 1922. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911; Alfred A. Knopf, 1922.

The Three Mulla-Mulgars. London: Duckworth and Co., 1910. Alfred A. Knopf, 1919.

The Listeners, And Other Poems. London: Constable and Co., 1912. Henry Holt and Co., 1916.

A Child's Day, A Book of Rhymes. London: Constable and Co., 1912. E. P. Dutton and Co., 1912; Henry Holt and Co., 1923.

Peacock Pie, A Book of Rhymes. London: Constable and Co., 1913. Henry Holt and Co., 1917.

Motley, And Other Poems. London: Constable and Co., 1918. Henry Holt and Co., 1918.

Rupert Brooke and the Intellectual Imagination. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1919. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1920.

Portraits, poems to music by D. S. Smith. Oliver Ditson Co., 1919.

Flora, a book of drawings by Pamela Bianco with illustrative poems by Walter de la Mare. London: William Heinemann, 1919. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1919.

Collected Poems, 1901-1918. London: Constable and Co., 1920. Henry Holt and Co., 1920.

The Veil, And Other Poems. London: Constable and Co., 1921. Henry Holt and Co., 1922.

Down-Adown Derry. London: Constable and Co., 1922. Henry Holt and Co., 1922.

Crossings, A Play. London: Beaumont Press, 1922. Alfred A. Knopf (to be published in the fall of 1923).

Memoirs of a Midget. London: W. Collins Sons and Co., 1922. Alfred A. Knopf, 1922.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PARODY OUTLINE OF LITERATURE

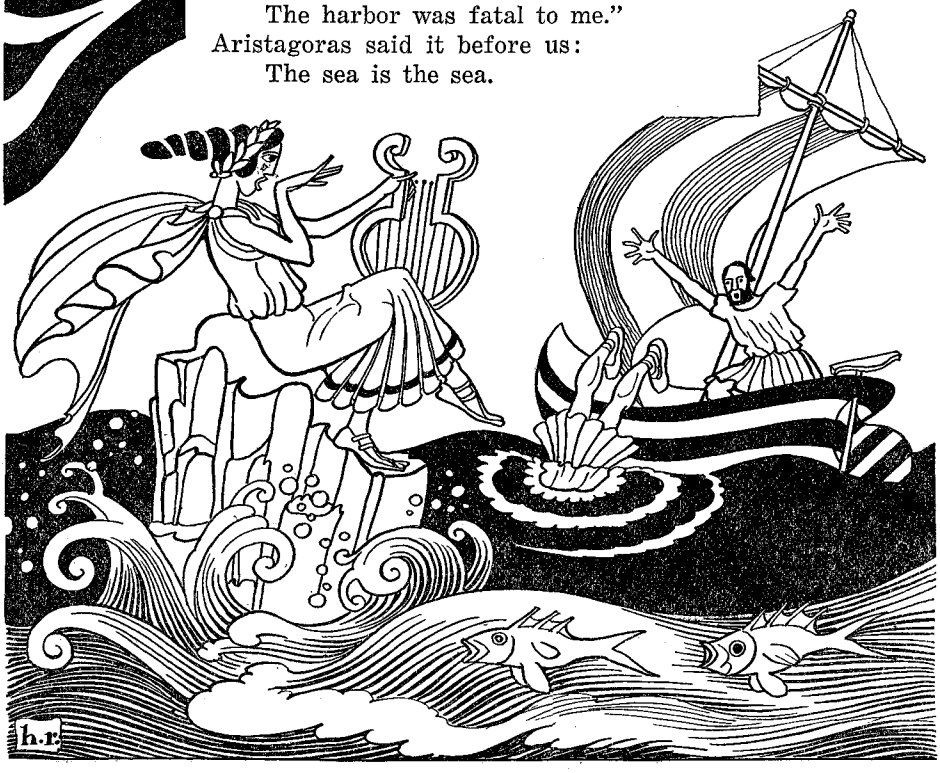
VIII: WITH MEEK APOLOGY TO THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY*

By Aline Kilmer, Illustrated by Herb Roth

"EVERY sea is the sea:
Why do we foolishly blame
The Western Seas or the Cyclades?
Are they not all the same?

"A puppy may drown in a puddle,
A baby may drown in a font,
You may be drowned in Long Island Sound,
You in the Hellespont.

"Then let who will pray for fair weather:
The harbor was fatal to me."
Aristagoras said it before us:
The sea is the sea.



A parody on the type of poem characteristic of "The Greek Anthology", in the style of Mrs. Kilmer's verse. This is the eighth instalment of the series in which various American authors, using well known classics, attempt to parody themselves.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Plays and Motion Pictures of the Month

By John Farrar

PLAYS IN NEW YORK WORTH SEEING

1. ICEBOUND: A *realistic tragi-comedy of New England life which is this year's Pulitzer Prize play.*

2. AREN'T WE ALL?: *Effervescing domestic and social comedy with Cyril Maude in a rôle quite as good as "Grumpy". (Reviewed below.)*

3. ZANDER THE GREAT: *Alice Brady giving a fine performance in a western comedy melodrama. Heart interest furnished by a stage child.*

4. ROMEO AND JULIET: *Miss Cowl has broken all records in her passionate portrayal of the famous juvenile heroine.*

5. MERTON OF THE MOVIES: *A satire on the moving picture spirit in which comedy quarrels with sentiment in the able acting of Glenn Hunter and Florence Nash.*

6. THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE: *A revival of Shaw's discussion of Puritanism. Entertaining and even exciting. (Reviewed below.)*

7. THE OLD SOAK: *Don Marquis's comedy of Prohibition days.*

8. RAIN: *Jeanne Eagels as Sadie Thompson, the girl who completely upsets a South Sea Island missionary, has been acclaimed by the critics.*

9. YOU AND I: *Good American high comedy which is played with deftness by an expert cast.*

10. LITTLE NELLIE KELLY, UP SHE GOES, *and* THE CLINGING VINE *are pretty good comedies with very good music.* DEW DROP INN, *not a very good comedy, is completely redeemed by the presence of Mr. James Barton. (Reviewed below.)*

HOW the good old plays persist! How noticeable are the excellences, oddities, and crudities of latter day acting! Recent revivals have made it possible to observe what quality of play one may bring before a present day public, with hope for its survival. I have seen seven old plays rushed down from the attic during the past month, and more are announced. Of the seven, curiously enough, it was two plays of Mr. William Shakespeare that stood the test of time with the least grace. "As You Like It", given elaborate showing by the American National Theatre, proved more funereal than farcical; and even violent attempts at jazzing on the part of a gallant band of Ethiopians could not make "The Comedy of Errors" the merry farce it must once have seemed. These two plays depend entirely on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

situations which call for a credulity that audiences are no longer asked to possess. Both hinge on cases of mistaken identity, and in neither is there particular regard for the plausible. Can't we generalize, then, as follows? Only those plays may be revived satisfactorily that deal fairly simply with the essential incidents of life and, in their plotting, are not too greatly hampered by stage conventions, language, or unexplained eccentricities of the time in which the play was written. I say *unexplained* eccentricities. A duel would perhaps be considered eccentric today, but it is definitely a part of our common tradition and, therefore, explicable.

Shakespeare, after all, has had a successful season; but in both Mr. Barrymore's "Hamlet" and Miss Cowl's "Romeo and Juliet" it is the vivifying of characters who represent a fundamental emotion that has created a degree of warm appeal. Both of these plays are, after all, great character studies against a background of capable melodrama. In both productions the other elements of the play were pushed as far into the background as possible, to allow the swift progress of the action of the main character. Whether the academicians like this or no, it is probably the only way to produce Shakespeare with success today.

Lee Simonson gave to "As You Like It" great beauty of setting, of costume, and of lighting. Marjorie Rambeau as Rosalind, and Margalo Gillmore as Celia, contributed undeniable feminine graces. The comedy was staged, however, with such painstaking reverence, and with such a curious monotony of tone and gesture, that it became not only distinctly tedious but, at times, actually unintelligible. I believe that the time has passed when declaiming in the theatre is possible. This can still be expected from the rostra at high school graduations but surely not from the American stage, particularly when that able gentleman, Robert Milton, is the director.

"The Inspector General", Nikolai Gogol's great comedy, received a sorry presentation by Maurice Swartz of the Yiddish Art Theatre. Swartz, himself, as Khlestakov, the bookkeeper, gave an interesting, if not a spirited performance. The critics uniformly decided that here was a play which did not measure up to reputation. On the contrary, it seems to me that here is a play which, with an all star cast and a sharpened translation, would be as successful as Sheridan's "The Rivals". Its comedy results from a combination of universal themes, political bribery and the obsequiousness of the bourgeoisie toward authority. An entire town mistakes a pompous young bookkeeper for the Inspector General. It is a guilty town. It does not wish to be inspected. It resorts to wholesale bribery of the young gentleman, who not only becomes a guest in the house of the Town Governor but proves distinctly personable to both the Governor's wife and daughter. There are at least a dozen chances for expert comic characterization. There are a half dozen more for clowning. The scene where one after another of the town officials bribe Khlestakov is a masterpiece in subtle shading of character. It was played in a dreary monotone. How fascinating it would have been if each shade of difference between these fools had been made clear. Visualize this play with James T. Powers and Frank Craven as the town boobs, Dobchinsky and Bobchinsky, with Maclyn Arbuckle as the Town Governor, with Mary Shaw as his wife, Violet Heming as his daughter,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lionel Barrymore or McKay Morris as the insolent young bookkeeper. Why, it's a tremendous play, if you can visualize it with a great cast! If you don't believe me, read it, and dream your own production. I warrant that you'll have a good time.

The Ethiopian Art Theatre, an organization of Negro players which had a successful season in Chicago this year, did not fare so well in New York City. This in spite of the fact that there seemed to be every prejudice in its favor. So anxious were the critics to praise indeed that they seized on a dialect curtain raiser called "The Chip Woman's Fortune" and bestowed their laurels. The curtain raiser did show what these talented players — at their best, endowed with an unusual understanding of the carrying tones of human speech; at their worst, rankly amateur — might have done with a realistic play. This particular bit was a pointless sketch with neither humor nor tenderness. Oscar Wilde's "Salome" is at most a tiresome affair. Its musical prose is even duller than the dullest blank verse. Its insistent decadence is either absurd or nauseating. Why it was chosen to present the artistically inclined Negroes to New York is difficult to understand. They performed, in some cases, with passion, in others with zeal. Most of them displayed an unusual beauty of voice. The following week "The Comedy of Errors" was presented, a jazz band playing off stage, and a ring master plying his whip while clown stage hands set flat scenery on a circus tent platform. For a time the result was novel, if not highly marked by speed. The Dromios, played by a dancing comedian, gave the desired effect. The production was not uninteresting as an experiment; but surely it was no more than that. The ardent supporters of this art movement regret that the public seems unwilling to receive Negroes in artistic setting, so to speak. This is absurd. The public would receive no one for long in either "The Comedy of Errors" or "Salome". It rejects prime favorites in bad plays. Let the Negro Art Players turn their very real abilities to a native comedy or tragedy first. There was no marked lack of cordiality in New York City toward Charles Gilpin in "The Emperor Jones". As a movement there is nothing but good to be said of the Ethiopian Art Theatre; but an ambitious director, I fear, allowed his desire to present artistic novelties to obscure his sense of showmanship.

The eighteenth century was a period of freshness and frankness in literature. It was Dr. Johnson's time; it was Fanny Burney's — earlier, it was Pope's and Defoe's and Addison's and Swift's. It was the playground of the novel before the novel fell into the hands of the Victorians. The novel was young and vigorous, then. Pamela and Clarissa, Joseph Andrews (poor soul), Roderick, Tristram, and Tom Jones — sturdy, they were; sturdy they are. Sturdy, too, was comedy, and built with bricks that survive. The year 1773 brought forth "She Stoops to Conquer"; 1775, "The Rivals"; 1777, "The School for Scandal". All three of them are playable today. "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet" cloak the struggles of the soul in melodrama; the comedies of Johnson's age clothed the complicated events and sentiments of the heart in brave jesting. Sheridan's characters as they speak out in "The Rivals" are types that will never fade — the cantankerous yet loving father, the bribed maid, the lovable coward, the foolishly fond old woman. They cannot die because they are always about us. The Actors'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Equity Association production of "The Rivals" this year was in most things thoroughly satisfying. The text used was not that of Joseph Jefferson but a revised version of that script by Francis Wilson. Wilson himself was an admirable Bob Acres. With two exceptions, the rest of the all star cast acted with the spirit and style which the costumes and Sheridan's humor demanded. These two, Eva Le Gallienne and Sidney Blackmer, brought the spirit of Eugene O'Neill and Clare Kummer into resounding eighteenth century halls. What they did, they did well enough; but they did not fit the picture frame. Such persons as do not find Mrs. Malaprop an amusing character may nurse their grievance in the knowledge that audiences at the Forty-eighth Street and the Earl Carroll Theatres, where "The Rivals" played, rocked and rolled at every verbal misapplication the expert Mary Shaw uttered.

"Sweet Nell of Old Drury", revived also by the Actors' Equity, with Laurette Taylor as Nell Gwynne, seems to me hopelessly dated. It is a production of beauty and grace. The stage sets by Woodman Thompson are massive, the costumes sufficiently colorful. Miss Taylor is charming; but the play is a wooden thing. It lacks sparkle. It is melodrama cloaking nothing — just melodrama and rather feebly comedy. Paul Kester has written plays for many a great actress: Mrs. Fiske, Mme. Modjeska, Mme. Janauschek, Miss Marlowe, Miss Anglin, Mrs. Langtry, Miss Neilson — and more, doubtless. He is still writing. It was he who adapted "The Woman of Bronze" for Miss Anglin several seasons past. An expert craftsman in the theatre is Mr. Kester; but his "Sweet Nell" seems to me more crafty than artistic, more artificial than true.

THE DRAMA SHELF

"In Confidence" by Alvilde Prydz (Stewart Kidd). Two women talk of their love affairs without much drama resulting.

"Eyes That Cannot See" by Albert Gnudtzmann (Stewart Kidd). A study of mother love that is tedious but has moments of poignancy.

"Peer Gynt" by Henrik Ibsen, translated by William and Charles Archer (Scribner). Ibsen's fantastic play illustrated by pictures of the Theatre Guild production, with the complete text of the Guild's abridgment.

"Melloney Holtspur or The Pangs of Love" by John Masefield (Macmillan). A fine and moving study of inheritance. Its mysticism does not affect its reading quality; but I doubt its practicability for stage presentation.

"Yniard" by John Martin (Stewart Kidd.) Mystical, poetical, and misty. A one act play which, doubtless, points an excellent moral.

"The Trysting Place" by Booth Tarkington (Stewart Kidd). How various people call each other "darling" among the potted palms. A light and vivacious little comedy.

"Tragedies of Sex" by Frank Wedekind (Boni, Liveright). These morbid plays are reissued for persons who enjoy this particular form of sex-charged discursive drama.

"False Premises" by Laurence Housman (Brentano). Inconsequential one act plays that are annoyingly lacking in dramatic fibre.

"Knut At Roeskilde" by Philip Merivale (Four Seas). Somewhat in the manner of Lord Tennyson who, after all, was more poet than dramatist. This play, however, is not great in poetic quality.

"Doctor Johnson" by A. Edward Newton (Atlantic Monthly). A dignified and pompous arrangement of much brilliant Johnsonian dialogue which might be interesting with an all star cast.

"Dethronements" by Laurence Housman (Macmillan). Elaborate

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political discussions disguised in dialogue which is not so dull as it is involved.

"Arthur" by Laurence Binyon (Small, Maynard). A placid Arthurian drama in blank verse which is scarcely ever illuminated by flashes of either real poetry or action.

"The Vegetable" by F. Scott Fitzgerald (Scribner). A comedy of morons from eighteen to eighty; the usual concoction of gin, satire, and fantasy with a characteristic Fitzgerald twist at the end.

"The White Peacock" by Olga Petrova (Four Seas). Madame Petrova's play which she used as a starring vehicle, published with pictures of herself.

The Theatre Guild's choice for a spring revival was a happy and a lucky one. "The Devil's Disciple", being the early Shaw, has story as well as satire. The present day prevalence of Puritanism and its boob brother Comstockery makes a diatribe against both appropriate. In this story of Revolutionary days, of Dick Dudgeon who worships the devil most engagingly, of General Burgoyne who is as witty an old duck as any drawing room hero portrayed by Cyril Maude (Roland Young is here his admirable self), Shaw has seemingly given way to the happy ending. Dick is saved; but oh, what must happen after the curtain goes down and the triangle composed of the Godfearing hero minister, his wife, and Dick, begins to function! The similarity of the first act of the Shaw comedy to that of "Icebound" and of "A Square Peg", two of this season's American plays, has already been noted by the critics. A thing so coincidental is not important except to show that neither technique nor characters change very much with the years.

Two ill fated productions, "Pride" and "My Aunt From Ypsilanti", passed rapidly into oblivion where they are doubtless not restless.

"For Value Received" is an old-fashioned, workmanlike, excellently acted, and — at times — effective play. It is the old, old story of the man who decides to make his mistress an honest woman by marrying her, only to find that she demands not his name but his real love. All this is tricked out and made sympathetic by good devices until the too great chanciness of events in the second and third acts does not permit even the fine acting of Augustin Duncan and Maud Hanaford to keep the play from sagging. The last act, however, jumps up gaily with real humor and pathos.

Until Norman Trevor donned a perfectly appointed British uniform in "The Mountebank" I was totally at a loss. As General Lackaday he adds a touch of romance as well as reality to what is a strangely drab and unromantic dramatization of a vivid and romantic novel.

"Aren't We All?" with Cyril Maude as a splendidly meddling father, father-in-law, roué, widower, about-to-be groom, is one of those plays that send an audience smiling and delighted to the streets. It is comedy of the school of Sutro, with a modernity that cloaks its somewhat stiff skeleton. A young lady finds her husband in another lady's arms when she returns to her home after a visit to Egypt. She is unforgiving. Father-in-law, however, who knows just how shopgirls behave when taken to the British Museum, arranges everything. In the course of events the lady wife nearly loses her so called honor, but in the end she finds her husband again and projects her father-in-law into matrimony which he had been strenuously avoiding. This is carefully

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fashioned light comedy, with a streak of sentiment. It approaches the farcical, yet it never seems unreal. The frank relation between father and son on the subject of woman has surely never been portrayed more subtly than by Mr. Maude and Leslie Howard in "Aren't We All?" There seems to be no good reason why this comedy should not continue through the summer and on into the autumn season. It has all the accents of success.

Al Jolson has returned in "Bombo", with new songs and the same undisturbed vigor. James Barton in "Dew Drop Inn", which is only a fairly respectable musical comedy, is superb. An essay on Mr. Barton's feet as compared with those of Mr. Chaplin may now be expected from Stark Young, that student of the theatrical art. James Barton's dancing has in it all the elements of Latin comedy and of Greek tragedy. It is lyric as well as comic. What more can you find to say, Mr. Young?

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *A masterpiece of photographic story telling which shows the heroism of those who made our great west.*

2. DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS: *Sea atmosphere has never been shown better than in the background of this rather melodramatic yarn of whaling days.*

3. THE ISLE OF LOST SHIPS: *A fantastic and improbable story which has several thrills and good pictures of a storm at sea. (Reviewed below.)*

4. THE SOUL OF A BEAST: *Excellent photography in a somewhat old-fashioned story — a combination of the circus tent and the Canadian northwest. The too-sophisticated will not enjoy it, for the hero is a nice elephant. (Reviewed below.)*

EACH month I become more and more conscious of the fact that, for the most part, I disagree entirely with the metropolitan motion picture critics. Where one of them says, "This is high screen art", I am pretty sure to be bored. I should like to get some reactions on motion pictures from BOOKMAN readers. Do you not agree with me that the best thing the screen can do for us is thoroughly to amuse us? I like melodrama. Now the trouble with most blood and thunder novels is that they are badly written. When Victor Hugo or Joseph Hergesheimer turns to melodrama one reads it with pleasure. More and more on the screen, we can watch rousing good stories and not expect the intelligence to be insulted.

Thomas Meighan in Rex Beach's "The Ne'er Do Well" is his usual urbane self. The story, while not extraordinary, is adequate and presented with a fair amount of skill. It is the tale of a young Yale man whose father cuts him adrift, and who in South America is successful, after proper complications in both love and business. "The Isle of Lost Ships" is a bizarre tale of the Sargasso Sea, of derelicts, bestial sailors, submarines, an innocent but escaped convict, a millionaire, daughter, etc., etc. Romance heightened by sea atmosphere, as you may imagine. However, when

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you see this picture, you will find it unusual for one thing in particular: the technique of the continuity. Much of what would ordinarily seem essential to the story is eliminated. For example, we are never told just what sort of murder the hero did not commit. Events are confined to the present, without the sometimes annoying flash backs to other days. Straight narrative is used and is exceedingly effective. This is a well directed picture. The crowd of sailors on the abandoned island is well handled, and there are moments of comic relief which are excellent. "The Girl of the Golden West", from the Belasco play, is a fair picture so far as story value goes, but its scenic effects are superb. Here the technique of the stage is used with annoying effect. The climactic scene in which the girl plays cards for her lover's freedom is so broken up with screen dialogue that the drama loses its effectiveness.

"Masters of Men" is a picture after my own heart. It shows the increasingly clever Cullen Landis as Dick Halpin who runs away from home to join the navy. He has his enemies, his loves, and his chances for heroism. There are three or four excellent fights, and we are given a thrilling and realistic picture of the Spanish War. The photography in "Masters of Men" is far from perfect; but the action never flags. It is navy propaganda, pacifists will not like it, the love story is foolish and sentimental; but if you don't enjoy it, you are growing old. Ditto for "The Soul of a Beast" in which a remarkably human elephant, the daughter of a circus owner, a crippled boy, and a villain in buckskins engage in dagger fights, canoe chases, and water battles with much gusto. Some of the forest vistas are exceedingly lovely, and the elephant is one which many would be willing to have about the house.

THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Monthly Book Bulletin", McClurg's "Monthly Bulletin of New Books", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

"PIRACY"—Michael Arlen—*Doran.* Efforts of a young Englishman, who has heard that love is an art, to become an artist.

THE PUPPET SHOW—Martin Armstrong—*Brentano.* A variegated collection of fantastic satires, fables, and imaginative writing that, like old wine, should be tasted slowly to best please.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* The older generation here turns to the manners of the now obsolete flapper and makes exceedingly merry with a rather astonishing physical theme.

THE MATHERSON MARRIAGE—Ruby M. Ayres—*Doran.* She had a cruel husband, a passionate lover, and a darling little boy, but some women are never satisfied.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DOBACHI — John Ayscough — *Macmillan.* There is something reminiscent of the hexameter romances of Longfellow in this quiet tale of a Cornish religious sect in New England.

THE SCUDDERS—Irving Bacheller—*Macmillan.* Wartime riches disrupt a family to whom wealth is a poison. Socrates Potter, who tells the story in humorous, gently satirical style, is a real find.

THE DIM LANTERN — Temple Bailey — *Penn.* "Jane, you are making mountains of molehills," says the hero to the heroine, and the author has made her story of the little trials of simple love, so to speak.

KEEBAN—Edwin Balmer—*Little, Brown.* Mystery and adventure of Chicago's "Gold Coast" and underworld. An unashamed thriller told at high speed with a romance that justifies the hurry.

THE LAST OF THE VIKINGS—Johan Bojer —*Century.* A beautiful and vigorous moving picture of the old fishing life in Norway.

THE GEESE FLY SOUTH—Mary Bourn—*Doubleday, Page.* The destruction of the Redwood Forests, the strange codicil to a will, and a touch of mysticism that doesn't quite ring true.

*THROUGH THE WHEAT—Thomas Boyd—*Scribner.* A Leatherneck who saw action aplenty gives an unvarnished close up of war as is.

THE WRONG SHADOW—Harold Brighouse —*McBride.* Clever light comedy in which Mr. Bassitt's conscience plays the leading rôle.

TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION—Edgar Rice Burroughs—*McClurg.* The ape man and his mate and Jad-bal-ja the great lion find life intricate for a time—but all ends happily.

THE COMMUNICATING DOOR—Wadsworth Camp—*Doubleday, Page.* Seven mystery stories. In the first one the author does not play fair with the reader. The second story is excellent and the remaining five mediocre.

*ROUGH-HEWN—Dorothy Canfield—*Harcourt, Brace.* A tolerant, wise, pleasing story of two young Americans who love after growing up in normal but complicated surroundings.

ANNETTE AND BENNETT—Gilbert Cannan —*Seltzer.* Group portrait of a family, showing what modern industrialism can do toward debasing the old English stock.

*ONE OF OURS—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* The story of this hero has apparently pleased many, for it is the Pulitzer Prize novel of the year.

THE PUBLIC SQUARE — Will Levington Comfort—*Appleton.* "It breathes," states Dickey—referring to a manuscript submitted to The Public Square; and we purloin his words as a perfect definition to describe the book.

A LOVER AT FORTY—Gerald Cumberland —*Doran.* But what was really important was a young woman of nineteen who would not be denied . . . simply would not.

THE ESCAPADE OF ROGER DREW—Frank Dilnot—*Stratford.* A farce comedy idea in which a tricky young man is remarkably lucky.

OUT OF THE SILENT NORTH—Harry Sinclair Drago—*Macaulay.* Heine's famous song might have been written about this French-Canadian trapper who loved a maiden whose heart was given to a man who was pledged to another. It is a relief when the hoped for pleasant ending arrives.

*THE ENCHANTED APRIL—"Elizabeth"—*Doubleday, Page.* If you would like to escape from your husband and run away to Italy, this delightful novel tells you how.

MADAME CLAIRE—Susan Ertz—*Appleton.* A leisurely romance well suited to while away the tedium of a train journey, or an invalid's convalescent hours.

FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* A frank statement that young womanhood has a perfect right to flame, if it chooses.

THE COPPER BOX—J. S. Fletcher—*Doran.* The storm, the lonely country house, and the girl; also the whimsical motto engraved on the box itself; an agreeable mysteriousness with no great mystery.

*FAINT PERFUME—Zona Gale—*Appleton.* A story of ideal love set against a background of cynical realism, which shows this author at her best and worst.

THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD—Philip Gibbs —*Doran.* Postwar Europe and its problem ably combined with the trials of love.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HELEN OF LONDON—Sidney Gowing—*Putnam.* Here is an illogical story that yet contrives to keep the reader alert and mystified.

THE STEP ON THE STAIR—Anna Katharine Green—*Dodd, Mead.* Its author's best book since "The Leavenworth Case" should fascinate all lovers of romance.

WANDERER OF THE WASTELAND — Zane Grey—*Harper.* Soul struggles and wanderings in the great desert.

SKY-LINE INN—Donal Hamilton Haines—*Houghton Mifflin.* Emerson on mouse traps is once more justified by this tale of a super excellent cook whose quaint inn lies far off the main road. There is fighting and fishing, love and intrigue, with the brave little chef and his "Henri of tin" stirring things up all the time.

VICTORIA—Knut Hamsun—*Knopf.* The sad beauty of a frustrated love enhanced by a careful economy of words.

CONTACT—Frances Noyes Hart—*Doubleday, Page.* Short stories that are permeated with color, grace, and imagery. A real relief after much reading of the so called new school of realism.

PIRATE PRINCES AND YANKEE JACKS—Daniel Henderson — *Dutton.* Thinly disguised as fiction, this is a stirring account of the way our infant navy showed the other world powers how to wipe out the Barbary pirates.

*THE BRIGHT SHAWL—Joseph Hergesheimer—*Knopf.* A story of ideals as opposed to love, which is told with Cuban atmosphere and melodramatic detail.

STRICTLY BUSINESS—F. Morton Howard —*Dutton.* The disreputable old coaster "Jane Gladys" puts into home port and the harbor master wisely removes his rabbits from outside his kitchen door.

THE BISHOP OF THE OZARKS—Milford W. Howard — *Times-Mirror.* A spiritualistic melodrama adapted from the films. As a novel it is a good movie.

PRINCE HEMPSEED — Stephen Hudson — *Knopf.* Neglected by his pleasure loving parents, a fanciful child sets down his naïve record up to his eighteenth year. The sophisticated will read an entire volume between the lines.

WITHIN THESE WALLS—Rupert Hughes—*Harper.* A study of crumbling reputations and fortunes combined with the romance of a great engineering feat.

BARNEY—S. B. H. Hurst—*Harper.* Hairy chested adventure in Canada and Alaska, supervised by an ironic theology.

*THIS FREEDOM—A. S. M. Hutchinson—*Little, Brown.* Women are still wondering whether or not they should stay at home. Doubtless they like being told that they should, for they are still reading this novel.

SIMON CALLED PETER—Robert Keable—*Dutton.* Apparently the world is still interested in how a young minister is disturbed by new contacts with sex.

SIX BREEDS—R. G. Kirk—*Knopf.* When we are shown an illustration of what is apparently a "Boston" and are told he is a famous Pit Terrier, we fear the worst—in this case our fears were justified.

ECHO—Margaret Rivers Larminie—*Putnam.* She had an illegitimate child. He was discovered kissing her, so he married her. This sounds terrible but the book isn't; really, it isn't.

THE VOICE FROM THE VOID — William LeQueux—*Macaulay.* In this mystery novel both criminals and victims make use of all the newest discoveries in radio, poison gas, and aeronautics.

WOLVES OF THE SEA—Gaston Leroux—*Macaulay.* Convicts on the voyage to the French penal colony overpower the crew of the prison ship in a wildly fantastic story.

*BABBITT — Sinclair Lewis — *Harcourt, Brace.* The realtor, the Rotarian, the Kiwanis Clubman—the rubber stamp American type ably satirized.

UNDER A THOUSAND EYES—Florence Bingham Livingston—*Cosmopolitan.* She went back to the tiny village of her childhood and found it a disconcerting mixture of poisonous gossip and practical charity, of stupid intolerance and unselfish neighborly devotion. In the end, however . . .

MAN'S COUNTRY—Peter Clark Macfarlane—*Cosmopolitan.* Business and love are opposed in a story which is more readable than unusual.

LANTY HANLON—Patrick MacGill—*Harper.* The story of a wild Irishman who never went back on his word.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SHINING PYRAMID—Arthur Machen—*Covici-McGee.* Miscellany gathered from old files showing extraordinary versatility and the expected Machen artistry.

THE HOUSE OF THE ENEMY—Camille Mallarmé—*McBride.* A carefully built up narrative laid in an out of the way province in Spain. It is impossible to judge the characters by ordinary standards, but Candida might well typify the age old submission and revolt of woman.

THE DAY'S JOURNEY—W. B. Maxwell—*Doubleday, Page.* Two old friends, confirmed bachelors, stumble into wedded life with pathetic results.

THE OXFORD CIRCUS—Hamish Miles and Raymond Mortimer—*Knopf.* A take off on the stereotyped formula for Oxford fiction—filled with satire, irony, and humor. The book is exceedingly clever and its illustrations do it justice.

MR. AND MRS. SEN—Louise Jordan Miln—*Stokes.* An East-West romance and its difficulties, with good Chinese atmosphere and a touch of diplomatic Washington.

*WHERE THE BLUE BEGINS—Christopher Morley—*Doubleday, Page.* A new variety of dog story in which Mr. Morley excels himself and has gained a widening public.

SWEET PEPPER—Geoffrey Moss—*Dutton.* Postwar Budapest, with an English girl proving the commercial value of original sin. Frank without being sensuous, interesting, and a trifle improbable.

TRODDEN GOLD—Howard Vincent O'Brien—*Little, Brown.* Two marriages compared: what do we wish in life—money or content? What really makes for happiness?

THE HAT OF DESTINY—Mrs. T. P. O'Connor—*Lieber, Lewis.* A very light, but readable and amusing warning to all those who have been, are going to be, or wish to be divorced.

OLD FOR-EVER—Alfred Ollivant—*Doubleday, Page.* Stirring adventures of a Punjabi battalion along the frontier of British India.

THE SEVEN CONUNDRUMS—E. Phillips Oppenheim—*Little, Brown.* Seven unusual detective stories, linked by the aid of a vaudeville troupe and a mysterious leader who may be either supercrook or detective.

THE FOUR STRAGGLERS—Frank L. Packard—*Doran.* A thriller from start to finish, which is, approximately, from London to the Florida keys.

SINGLE REELS—Albert Bigelow Paine—*Harper.* These cheerful skits, full of wholesome fun and rollicking good nature, are happily illustrated by Peter Newell.

THE VISION OF DESIRE—Margaret Pedler—*Doran.* An idealistic gentleman has a most difficult time retaining his faith in womankind. Several injured reputations aid the plot.

THE BELOVED BRUTE—Kenneth Perkins—*Macaulay.* Love regenerates a brutal border ruffian after a series of harrowing adventures.

BLACK, WHITE AND BRINDLED—Eden Phillpotts—*Macmillan.* Stories of the West Indies and the races that abound there.

*DANGER—Ernest Poole—*Macmillan.* The meddling feminine propagandist analyzed. A brilliant if unpleasant study.

STELLA DALLAS—Olive Higgins Prouty—*Houghton Mifflin.* Should one marry in one's own class? Here is a study of what may happen when one doesn't.

WISDOM OF THE WILDERNESS—Charles G. D. Roberts—*Macmillan.* Major Roberts enjoys high repute as an entertaining writer of animal stories founded on scientific facts. Though no story in this collection equals his best, all are uniformly good.

TIME IS WHISPERING—Elizabeth Robins—*Harper.* A romance that is as English as roast beef and almost as substantial.

THE HOUSE BY THE WINDMILL—Agnes Edwards Rothery—*Doubleday, Page.* If this book is a forecast, Miss Rothery will go far as a writer of clean, light, and entertaining fiction.

*IN DARK PLACES—John Russell—*Knopf.* Kipling combined with Thomas Burke, plus the author's own touch, makes these short stories fascinating, if sometimes inadequately written. So good that they should be better.

THE SEA-HAWK—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* The days of Queen Elizabeth form the background for this historical adventure novel.

DESOLATE SPLENDOR—Michael Sadleir—*Putnam.* Melodrama but good reading be-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cause, excusing a few improbabilities, it has much good writing.

DAUGHTERS OF THE RICH—Edgar Saltus —*Brentano.* Of the same school as "The Glimpses of the Moon" but without its distinction.

WHOSE BODY?—Dorothy L. Sayers—*Boni, Liveright.* A gruesome detective story in which the titled amateur sometimes guesses with almost superhuman accuracy.

IN THE LAND OF COTTON—Dorothy Scarborough—*Macmillan.* Miss Scarborough has chosen a tremendous theme, and one with which she is thoroughly familiar, but her book lacks effectiveness.

CORDELIA THE MAGNIFICENT—Leroy Scott —*Holt.* Cordelia speaks: "Mother has had a mighty hard time to keep things going with Lily and me on her hands, and only a little over thirty thousand a year"—now go on with the story.

RESTORATION — Ethel Sidgwick — *Small, Maynard.* A too long novel dealing with postwar society in England—worth reading if you can endure its interminable paragraphs.

THE HIDDEN ROAD—Elsie Singmaster— *Houghton Mifflin.* Another road-to-the-world story, this time with a sixteen year old heroine who wants to find out.

THE SHAME DANCE — Wilbur Daniel Steele—*Harper.* A dozen weird tales of faraway countries, each with a terrible twist that leaves a haunting memory.

A FRIEND AT COURT—Leon Stern and Elizabeth Stern—*Macmillan.* Probation Officer Mary Wright overcomes her many sociological problems in splendid style, but we fear Officer Wright is more an ideal than a living reality.

PONJOLA—Cynthia Stockley—*Putnam.* It is a drink (African)—Ponjola—and all about how a lady disguised as a gentleman fights for a soul and wins in the dark continent.

THE JEWEL OF SEVEN STARS — Bram Stoker—*Harper.* Ancient Egyptian magic preserved a princess of the Pharaohs in deathlike sleep until five thousand years later a learned man was able to give her another span of life. This story, first published twenty years ago, gains in interest through the finding of the tomb of the heroine's august relative.

THE WAKE OF THE SETTING SUN—William Averill Stowell — *Appleton.* On a little island off the coast of Lower California is played out an exciting drama of love and hate. A trained Gila monster brought from the deserts of Arizona complicates matters still further.

THE GUN RUNNER — Arthur Stringer— *Bobbs-Merrill.* A soldier of fortune uses primitive wireless (1909 pattern) to quell a South American revolution and proves himself a remarkable fighter.

PHANTOM WIRES — Arthur Stringer — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Jerome's crusade against the pool rooms furnished the theme of this melodrama, now reprinted after sixteen years.

THE ENCHANTED COUNTRY—Joan Sutherland—*Doran.* On the one hand, the bold outlaw in a Southern Pacific holdup, on the other, an English lord; now who could have suspected they were two and the same?

*THE FASCINATING STRANGER — Booth Tarkington—*Doubleday, Page.* One or two of Tarkington's best short stories and the rest of his second best, which are still far better than most.

HIS CHILDREN'S CHILDREN—Arthur Train —*Scribner.* New York society with its various generations is here presented in provocative and appealing array.

*THE CATHEDRAL—Hugh Walpole—*Doran.* An able study of the mind and soul of an intensively organized community — this one, an English cathedral town, with its politics and gossip.

SEVEN FOR A SECRET—Mary Webb—*Doran.* Rustic love story of the country bordering Wales. Mrs. Webb's poetic prose is charming.

MEN LIKE GODS—H. G. Wells—*Macmillan.* It was inevitable that this man should build an imaginary world for the application of his theories. Here it is.

MASQUES—Elizabeth Hall Yates—*Penn.* If one has nothing to say, why say it even if one says it well?

HABIT—Darryl Francis Zanuck—*Times-Mirror.* Four stories on the theme that a man may be down but he's never out, told by a star reporter in the most approved yellow journal style.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Puritanism and Art

DR. JOHN ERSKINE has dedicated his book "The Literary Discipline" (Duffield) to George Edward Woodberry. Dr. Stuart Pratt Sherman has dedicated his book, "The Genius of America" (Scribner), to no one. That is, perhaps, the difference between them. Professor Erskine's book is an able presentation of truths that are obvious but seldom stated, with an occasional note of bitterness concerning present day eccentricities in literature. Professor Sherman strikes out with strong original strokes. Where Dr. Erskine trots, Dr. Sherman gallops. Erskine is a professor, Sherman is a leader. Both books, I like. If you are interested in the cultural background of America, you should read them. Stuart P. Sherman, I have come to believe, is the foremost literary critic of America; wise, tolerant, brilliant, and withal able to write in popular tones. Occasionally he fails in his specific examples — I do not think he knows the details in the make up of his young people. When he generalizes about them, however, he is far from wrong. It is to a Puritanism as defined by Mr. Sherman that I pray for a speedy return. Character is art — and, I fancy, art is Puritanism. Certainly character is Puritanism. Professor Sherman says:

> I know how differently our young people feel; but, to my thinking, a national genius animated by an incomparably profound moral idealism does not seem such a contemptible moulding and formative influence for an artist to undergo. English-speaking poets, from Spenser to Walt Whitman, have grown great under the influence of such an environing spirit. At any rate, if the great artist, in expressing himself, expresses also the society of which he is a part, it should seem to follow, like a conclusion in geometry, that a great American artist must express the "profound moral idealism" of America. To rail against it, to lead an insurrection against it, is to repeat the folly of the Restoration wits. If in this connection one may use a bit of the American language, it is to "buck" the national genius; and this is an enterprise comparable with bucking a stone wall. On the other hand to acknowledge the leadership of the national genius, to subject one's self to its influence, to serve it according to one's talents, to find beautiful and potent forms to express its working — this is to ally one's self with the general creative effort of the country in all fields of activity; this is to be in a benign conspiracy with one's time and place, and to be upborne by the central stream of tendency.

He knows the faults of America, its sentimentalities and banalities; but he never worships revolt for the sake of revolt. In his essay on "Vocation" he utters one of the best sermons for the about to-be-graduated young that I know. Look it up.

The Poetry of Faery

A NEW edition of James Stephens's "Irish Fairy Tales" (Macmillan) makes this almost perfect book easier to obtain. Stephens is one of the few men writing today who have a sense of the actual magic of words and word arrangement. Other writers have powers of conception, sense of drama, and a naturalistic sense; but James Stephens knows the language in which to clothe his highly visioned stories. Ah yes, you may say; but what mate-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rial he has at his command! Well — such material is at everyone's command. Our own northern Algonquin myths have a beauty that has never been adequately interpreted. I can remember one incident, in which the giant Indian god spears a whale and lifts him on the point of his harpoon to the skies, where the lashing of the beast's tail stirs the stars and churns the milky way. The very names of the Irish stories are poetic. "Becuma of the White Skin", for example, or a title as simple as "Mongan's Frenzy". "Mongan's Frenzy" — it has a twist, a wry twist that is typically Irish. Practically every page of this great book contains passages that frighten with their strange beauty. Even out of its context, what a complete picture of the kingly boy this sentence gives:

> Fionn sat at the kindly man's feet, his hands absent among tall grasses, and listening with all his ears.

Or again, can't you see this tight lipped furious little guy:

> The cleric again looked at her coldly, with a harsh-lidded, small-set, grey-eyed glare, and waited for the king's reply.

Or one of the terrible daughters of Conaran:

> "Here", said Iaran, "is a love of a man. One could eat this kind of man," she murmured and she licked a lip that had whiskers growing inside as well as out!

Or Saeve, as she stands before Fionn:

> "She is the Sky-woman of the Dawn," he said. "She is the light on the foam. She is white and odorous as an apple blossom. She smells of spice and honey. She is my beloved beyond the women of the world. She shall never be taken from me."

I should think that children would like only parts of these stories — but so great and naïve a beauty cannot fail to make some appeal to the child mind.

Sheiks and Such

THE popularity of travel books seems, somehow, to have decreased. Just why this is, I don't know. Perhaps, now that the lean war years are vanishing, we are again able to travel almost as much as we like and therefore have no need of reading of far places. But I for one still read diaries of roaming adventurers with the same old thrill. It is, I fancy, a thrill largely of the poor old emotion, envy. "Prisoners of the Red Desert" (Dutton) is a story of petty sufferings that make a tragic whole. Its author, R. S. Gwatkin-Williams, tells of a submarine sinking in the East, prison days in the desert, escape, recapture, and ultimate rescue. A story of heroism and of personalities. It is not so good a book as "Beasts, Men and Gods" by a long, long way; but it has something of the same quality, the Defoe quality, the absolute impression of true narrative through the amassing of great detail. Captain Gwatkin-Williams, of the British Navy, is occasionally exceedingly childlike in his style. At other times, he writes with a fair amount of vividness. Knowing the present interest in cook books, I cannot refrain from giving you the following recipe quoted by the Captain:

> Take as many Libyan (lily-white) snails as may be required and submerge them in water which has been brought to the boil, taking care in the meanwhile that the snails have not escaped from their shells. Boil brilliantly for two minutes, when the snails will come out of the shells of their own accord. Throw away shells and boil snails for ten minutes. If hard-boiled snail is required much less time is needed. Serve according to what garnish is available. If no plates, saucepan should be passed around.

As for Rose Wilder Lane's "Peaks of Shala" (Harper), this expert journalist here gives a strenuous, color-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ful, and vivid picture of Albania. She has an extraordinary faculty for dramatizing her slightest incident. Her travel narrative is stirring. I am convinced that there is no corner of the world so dusty that Mrs. Lane could not find romance there. Witness the following (I may say that she has returned without Lulash):

"Well", said Perolli, "Lulash would like to have an American wife. I don't mean he put it to me so crudely as that. He didn't actually put it to me at all, in fact. But I know that he will give twenty thousand kronen for you, and you can stay here and make over the whole life of Shala, if you like."

"But why me? Why not Frances, or Alex?"

"Because you are all a long way past marrying age, in Albania, and their hair is long, so naturally these people think they are already married. But your hair is short, so they think you are a sworn virgin. In these mountains, when a girl is old enough to marry and absolutely refuses to marry the man to whom she has been promised, she may escape the marriage by swearing before the chiefs of the two tribes an oath of life-long virginity, and she cuts her hair, and takes a man's place in the tribe. Naturally, when they see you, at your age, with short hair, they think that is what you did. If you were an Albanian no one would dream of marrying you, for the man to whom your parents gave you would have to kill you to clear his honor, and all the chiefs before whom you had sworn would be bound in honor to see that your husband was killed. But America is a long way off; that man and the chiefs would hardly come so far after you, especially as your customs are so different. Besides, I think Lulash would take the chance, anyhow. He really very much wants a woman to help him with the people, and he will not marry a mountain woman."

FANTASY

By John V. A. Weaver

STARS —
If they could have a smell like flowers —

White, soft, sparklin',
So beautiful they hurt you —
Not proud and grand,
Just little and friendly —
Crowds and crowds of friends —

Night time by the river,
Stars all up above us,
Stars every side of us,
Like the whole Milky Way
Fell down around us —

And the way the blossoms smelled —

Stars —
If they could have a smell like flowers —

Honeysuckle!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

GAMALIEL BRADFORD'S "DAMAGED SOULS"

By William Lyon Phelps

Professor Phelps's review is the seventh of a series of longer book reviews to be published each month in THE BOOKMAN. *The books discussed will not necessarily be new nor will they be books which have never before been reviewed in the magazine. The aim of the editors is to present, in the selection of volumes and reviewers, articles which shall constitute solid pieces of criticism.*

GAMALIEL BRADFORD has fairly won his way to the head of the biographical essayists of America. He has all the necessary qualities, and nearly all the desirable ones except genius. He has learning, patience, humor, sympathy, and knows the difference between right and wrong. He is a student of political history and of human nature, and is profoundly and continuously interested in both. He writes with immense gusto. He forgets himself. There is no attempt at irony for the sake of irony, no thrusting of his own talents in the reader's face. He selects his models because he finds something irresistible in them, and endeavors to make us see wherein the fascination lies.

"Damaged Souls" is a good book, one that will add to the enjoyment of the intelligent reader, and to the author's reputation. These are not damned, but *damaged* souls; or at least we shall not find out whether or not they are damned until we join them. There are plenty of people in hell who would not consider these seven deadly sinners beneath their own social position. Caponsacchi said that Judas Iscariot had lived alone in hell for seventeen hundred years, because there was not a person there who would condescend to speak to him. Then, when Guido Francheschini arrived, Judas, turning around at the "prize of a footfall", showed a face made monstrous by solitude. He and Guido recognized instantly that they were kindred spirits and spent eternity as hell chums.

The seven that Gamaliel Bradford has selected are Benedict Arnold, Thomas Paine, Aaron Burr, John Randolph, John Brown, P. T. Barnum, and Ben Butler. Of these the nearest to damnation is probably Benedict Arnold, although Lytton Strachey would insist that his namesake of Rugby had done more harm. Arnold is damned, like an ill roasted egg, all on one side. On the other hand, modern liberal clergymen would exalt Tom Paine as a saint, and many Yankees would do the same for old John Brown. I believe that both of them stand nearer the torment than P. T. Barnum, on whose garments I can detect no smell of flame. It would be a particularly bad joke if Barnum were damned; he who proclaimed his Universalist faith in the teeth of Calvinistic Connecticut. Many practical jokes were played on Barnum during his lifetime, but this final one would be a bit thick.

Of the immortal seven, by merit raised to a bad eminence, the least interesting is Benjamin Franklin Butler, because he is the only one of the seven who was truly vulgar. Barnum

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was saved from vulgarity by his marvelous *bonhomie*, his unfailing high spirits, and his constant, keen, rapturous appreciation of the fact that vulgarity was exactly what the people wanted; he carried it to them by the carload. A man who is delightedly conscious of the efficiency of vulgarity, cannot, in the last analysis, be vulgar himself. Furthermore, the majority of the motion pictures of today, and nearly all the musical comedies, both of which forms of entertainment attract in the present year of grace thousands of the "best people", are so impressively more vulgar than anything in Barnum's circuses, that it will not do to hurl that accusation against the showman.

Not a single one of these men would have admitted that he was a great sinner, whereas Jonathan Edwards would not for a moment have denied it. These seven were very fond of themselves, and like nearly all of the sons and daughters of men, they ate, and wiped their mouths, and said, "I have done no wickedness." They could always find reasons in advance for doing whatever they wanted to, and reasons afterward for justification. Very few individuals are like Shakespeare's Richard, who soliloquized, "I am determined to prove a villain." Regarding men in the mass, it is difficult to overestimate either their stupidity or their conceit.

Gamaliel Bradford finds, as every honest biographer and every acute lawyer finds, that human testimony has little, if any, objective value. It is impossible to discover the truth. Testimony is good only for subjective purposes; it is a revelation, not of the criminal, but of the witness. The recoil of the gun is greater than the discharge. We know today that few books on Russia or on Ireland have any high percentage of truth, or really tell us much that can be trusted; and always, before beginning to read such a book, we wish to know on which side is the author. Then it is usually not necessary to read the book at all, any more than it is necessary to read book reviews in radical or in conservative journals, for we know perfectly well what they will say. Human testimony is delightful to all who love to watch the human comedy, because it makes such interesting fiction.

Gamaliel Bradford has done his best with his tangled mass of material, with letters, documents, confessions, autobiographies, family testimonials, and so on. All of these seven were loved by someone, and the loyalty of the wives of Arnold and Butler is beautiful and refreshing. Just as loyalty is one of the most admired of all virtues, and patriotism the only universal religion known to man — so powerful and all compelling that in the world war the churches simply followed the flag, whatever flag it happened to be — so a man who sells his country for cash is as detestable an object as can well be found. Arnold had previously shown many fine qualities. There can be little doubt that his vanity, not sufficiently fed by the Continental Congress, was the real cause of his otherwise inexplicable wrong-about-face.

John Randolph was sick in the head, *krank im Kopfe*. He just missed having a wonderfully happy life. A man of brilliant gifts, made for the adventures of parliamentary life and for the exciting pleasures of social intercourse, his career, his happiness, his mind were all eventually ruined by a cursed disposition, that grew by what it fed on, and destroyed him. He had a worm which dieth not. John Brown was a fanatic; nothing in his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life became him like the leaving of it. The Southerners should have laughed at his scheme, and turned him loose! Had they done so, his soul would never have got such a fine start. The moment you attempt to suppress fanaticism by violence, that moment you add enormously to its power. The soul of John Brown was an imponderable asset to the Northern troops, worth many generals and many battalions. Emerson said John Brown had made the gallows as venerable as the cross; a remark which disgusted the cool Hawthorne, who commented, "No one was ever more justly hanged." It seems strange that in this essay Mr. Bradford says, "Emerson was not an enthusiast, Thoreau was not, Theodore Parker was not." I think all three were enthusiasts.

I am also rather surprised to see Mr. Bradford saying of Barnum, "if he lingers in history at all, or in the memory of his American fellow-countrymen." He seems to me as sure of immortality as the other six damaged souls. Barnum forgotten?

The illustrations which embellish the book are decidedly interesting. There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face, but these pictures are bound to make one pause and look again.

Damaged Souls. By Gamaliel Bradford. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THE TURK AS HE SEES HIMSELF

By Demetra Vaka

TWO books about Turkey, by Turks, are of interest to all who would study the psychology of the Turk. Zia Bey is a business man who has lived for several years in America and is married to an American woman. Djemal Pasha belongs to the small clique of Young Turks who, despite their plighted word, brought about the *coup d'état* of 1913 and, smoking revolvers in hand, passed over the corpses of Nazim Pasha and seven others, seized the power, and held it during the entire world war. His memoirs are as naïve as the "Young Visiter" herself.

Divergent as were their fields of action, Zia Bey and Djemal Pasha display precisely the same psychological traits. If Disraeli in talking with royalty laid flattery on with a trowel, in lauding their own nation these two Turks put it on with a shovel. Both are puzzled as they are indignant that the races subject to Turkish rule should entertain the inexplainable desire for freedom from it.

Zia Bey writes:

> Five times a day the Turks give thanks to the Almighty, fervently confirm their faith that there is no god but God, and beg him to assist them in following the straight path, the path to salvation. Can people of this kind be as black as they are represented abroad? . . . For my part I can't believe this people capable of even hurting a fly or of killing a wolf, unless it be in self-defence.

"Justice and tolerance alone can explain the formation of the Turkish

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Empire and the rapid extension of Turkish dominion," Djemal Pasha says; yet he is equally insistent all through his book upon calling attention to the "age-long" and continual efforts of all parts of the empire to break away from its sway and establish their independence. With the lack of reasoning characteristic of so many of his race, it never occurs to him that there may be a good cause for this constant desire of Arab, Syrian, Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian, Macedonian, and Cypriot to throw off Turkish rule. In speaking of the Arab revolt during the world war he says:

> If I give all these details it is to expose Sherif Hussein's baseness and furnish an adequate reply to certain short-sighted people who have attributed the Sherif's rebellion to my bad administration.

The case of the Armenians is interesting. In 1921, Izzet Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Constantinople, looked me straight in the eyes and declared:

"Madame, there have been no Armenian massacres!"

He was so simple and sincere that I felt embarrassed. Zia Bey agrees with Izzet Pasha (who is one of his heroes). Djemal Pasha views the matter from a slightly different angle. "Even men like Mendelstamm", he writes, "who thoroughly detest the Turks cannot deny that during the events of those years" — the years when Izzet Pasha says the Armenians were *not* being massacred — "the Turks felt no sort of hatred toward the Armenians. Many Turks vied with one another in protecting the Armenians, and in Constantinople a number of Turkish families showed the greatest friendliness to their Armenian neighbors by hiding them in their houses to save them from death."

It seems a lack of modern efficiency to massacre and save from massacre a race toward whom one feels "no sort of hatred".

For himself Djemal highmindedly declares: "I condemn the practice of using the masses to suppress revolutionary movements and organize massacres. Such practices do a nation the utmost harm and cast a stain on their history."

To the average Young Turk with his enthusiasm, his ignorance, his patriotism, or his self-seeking —often inextricably intertwined — opinions are regarded as facts, arguments as proofs. "We proved to him by all kinds of arguments," Djemal Pasha writes more than once. Naïvely he relates how he and his colleagues deliberately deceived the French and the English ambassadors, and subsequently he calls down the wrath of heaven upon the Arabs for having descended to deceit in their efforts to gain their independence from the Turks. Also he attempts to controvert statements of Ambassador Morgenthau by mere assertions of his own which he expects the reader to accept as proof positive.

Zia Bey, a little more than Djemal Pasha, would lead one to believe that no single virtue in the Near East resides in any except a Turkish breast. He might persuade us that the Turks never practised polygamy, never were cruel, would not hurt a fly, were invariably modest and moral and sober except when contaminated by foreigners — in a word monopolized all the virtues in the decalogue; but when throughout his book we find no Turkish woman who is not "gracefully slim", either our faith in Zia Bey is shaken to the core, or we must conclude that he had eyes for none except the youngest of flappers.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

His book is interesting as showing the Turk as he himself thinks he is. It has little other value. That of Djemal Pasha on the other hand is of considerable importance historically. Not only did he deal personally with the great issues which confronted his country before and during the world war, but unconsciously he reveals how the triumvirate tricked even each other, as when Enver had him invited to Germany by the Kaiser, in order to carry out in his absence a policy of which he knew Djemal disapproved.

At a time when American capital is thinking of going largely into Asia Minor, it is interesting to read how the Young Turks pitted the commercial interests of one nation against those of another, with the intention of deceiving all. In Djemal Pasha's reminiscences these Young Turks give their "word of honor" with the careless freedom with which small boys cry, "I'll bet you a million dollars!"

Yet of the two books it is that of Djemal which creates sympathy for the Turks. It shows how trapped they were, how afraid of the big nations with their territorial greed, and it is one of the best arguments for some international organization which shall make the small feel secure to pursue their way without the necessity of lying and cheating which weakness and fear always bring in their train.

Although I have written six books about Turkey myself, I should advise anyone who could read but one to choose "Memories of a Turkish Statesman" as a perfect self-revelation of Turkish character and psychology.

Memories of a Turkish Statesman — 1913-1919. By Djemal Pasha. George H. Doran Company.

Speaking of the Turks. By Mufty-Zade K. Zia Bey. Duffield and Co.

DON QUIXOTE AMONG THE ARTISTS

By Pierson Underwood

"THIS is the story of a man who lived from the year 1853 to the year 1890. The events of his life, his actions and words are not imaginary but real. His name was Vincent Van Gogh, and he was what you call an artist, a description that may mean anything. In this case it means a drama, a queer eventful history, full of strange happenings. The action here related came to an end only a generation ago, although it seems as remote as the legend of Saint George and the Dragon."

These are the opening words of Meier-Graefe's study of Vincent Van Gogh, a book of curious charm, as idiosyncratic as the unhappy peasant Quixote who stumbles, lonely and awkward, through its pages. It is not the usual "artistic brochure", in spite of its appearance (superbly printed, illustrated, bound, in the Medici Society manner). It is much more akin to the novel or romance, or even to ballads and old tales. More than any recent book which the writer can call to mind (except certain of Willa Cather's) it has the quality of Hamsun's "Growth of the Soil". There is the same heightening of intensity by which things as well as people attain a curious reality — houses, trees, potatoes, stars. (There is this quality in Van Gogh's own work.) And, in each case, there is the central, heroic figure laboring incredibly in the midst of an immense solitude. For Isak, Hamsun's hero, this was simply the solitude of the Norwegian forests. But for Van Gogh it was the enforced solitude (among crowds) of a temperament that antagonized other men

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at the same time that it desperately desired them.

The book does not profess to criticize Van Gogh's paintings; nor to discuss modern art or other artists, except as they are signposts to point Van Gogh up one road or down another on his passionate, impossible quest. For everything he did was in pursuit of one object, the founding of a community which should somehow work for good in the darkness of modern civilization. He was by turns art dealer, divinity student, lay preacher, tramp. Each adventure ended in catastrophe and Van Gogh began anew. Only after all other attempts had crumbled to pieces in his hands did Van Gogh try art. Art was simply another means to the same ideal end. And art failed, as well, to do what Van Gogh hoped of it. Also it drove him mad and killed him in his thirty-seventh year.

Van Gogh had no great talent for art in the beginning; in fact he had less than the average man. What he possessed was an intense quality of feeling, and it is this that makes his pictures even of chairs and sacks of potatoes curiously exciting and moving to the spectator. The story of his building up, slowly and painfully—as if building a house with his own hands—the artistic consciousness which could make use of his emotion, this story is the theme of Meier-Graefe's book and the sufficient reason for its existence. Incidentally, it is told with a delightful prose rhythm (admirably recaptured by the translator) and the diction of old fairy tales, homely, poetic, vivid.

Vincent Van Gogh, A Biographical Study. By Julius Meier-Graefe, translated by John Holroyd Reece. With 102 illustrations after the works of the artist. Two volumes. The Medici Society.

WOOD, OPPENHEIM, AND OTHERS

By William Rose Benét

MY first distinct impression, upon turning over these books, is that Clement Wood has gained in poetic strength while James Oppenheim has lost. Ruth Comfort Mitchell, it seems to me, does adequately what she sets out to do: write narratives in verse, well knit and of considerable human interest. Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky continue their thorough and sensitive work as translators. To Harcourt's European Library they first contributed "Modern Russian Poetry", and they now add "Contemporary German Poetry". Such adequate translations and well chosen collections are a service to American critics, for purposes of comparison, and a service to the poetic art throughout the world in enlarging our knowledge of its contemporary development in other countries. As for Vachel Lindsay, "Going-to-the-Sun" is a comparatively slight and a somewhat disappointing volume, but it indicates certain interesting things about Vachel.

But first, to return to Clement Wood. Some of his Eagle Sonnets mark his highest present attainment in poetry. They are impressive. They are clearly and courageously reasoned. With all their direct reality they touch exaltation of mood. Lyrically Clement Wood is most uneven. There is a great gulf fixed between his worst and his best. "The Black Rose" is possessed of actual magic. The long poem "Canopus" is richly wrought. Yet often, elsewhere, his taste in words and his ear for cadence somehow fail him. He goes excruciatingly wrong.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is emotional power and intellectual honesty in "The Tide Comes In" — and just because of these qualities in the book the blunders and blemishes cause acute exasperation. But if there has been a loss in exuberance in this latest of Mr. Wood's volumes, there is also a notable strengthening of fibre. As a pitcher of planets his speed is slackening — but he has a lot more control!

Once James Oppenheim and Clement Wood seemed proceeding along much the same road poetically. Their paths have parted. Under the influence of Oppenheim's work Wood often wrote at his worst. Oppenheim, in that period, was at about his best, however. In the days of "Songs for the New Age", he was trenchant and memorable. Wood has now turned somewhat away from the mere celebration of ecstasy, just at the time when Oppenheim has found a new ecstasy — an ecstasy he celebrates in "Golden Bird", averring that this is the one book of his he would give to those who wish really to know his work.

I shouldn't. I should give them "Songs for the New Age", of the period before psychoanalysis set in. The present book is sometimes sonorous, often pungent with semi-biblical exhortation. But it is far more rhetoric than poetry. The only rhetoric it distinctly challenges is the rhetoric of King Solomon; and King Solomon could take it on with his eyes blindfolded and one hand tied behind him. That is the whole trouble. King Solomon, and the rest of the Old Testament in the King James version, have come to us through translators who were positive geniuses.

Yes, I know that the meaning and the message of "Golden Bird" is something entirely different. Granted. And I think it is often mere inflation. James Oppenheim has power and passion as a poet; he can command beautiful rhythms, but this celebration will never be another Song of Songs, and that is its direct attempt. I remember it only as a vigorous chanting — that failed — and the words are gone. Oppenheim will again do better. "The Mystic Warrior" seemed to me of far more interest.

These opinions are offered merely as my own opinions, perhaps stated too emphatically. Prolixity and inflation of attitude threaten both these poets. But Clement Wood seems to me to be turning aside from the danger to his poetry and Oppenheim, for the moment, to be encountering it. That is all. And it is merely one opinion.

I have myself written a prefatory note to Ruth Comfort Mitchell's book and perhaps I may refer readers to that as my fairly succinctly expressed personal opinion. I feel that she possesses unusual powers of sympathetic intuition and a very chivalrous nature. She has an ability in graphic narrative, though I often differ with her ideas of the proper technique.

Vachel Lindsay is turning from poetry — he has resented the label of "jazz poet" (a rôle he abhors!) — to his first love, pictorial art. "So Much the Worse for Boston" is the best poem in "Going-to-the-Sun", but the evidences of a return to drawing pictures and a turning to the Egyptian hieroglyphic are the significant things about the book. These aren't Vachel's best pictures — but I shall treasure forever those of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Queen Victoria.

I cannot follow German poetry in the original, so whether or no the Deutsch-Yarmolinsky translations are entirely accurate I cannot avouch. All I can say is that they are most inter-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

esting to read and that poetic experimentation in Germany seems to be flourishing. For anyone whose interest in poetry extends beyond poetry written in English both of the Deutsch-Yarmolinsky volumes, "Modern Russian Poetry" and "Contemporary German Poetry", should be valuable. They are translations exhibiting the skill of an able linguist and the inspiration of a fine poet.

Golden Bird. By James Oppenheim. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Tide Comes In. By Clement Wood. E. P. Dutton and Co.
Going-to-the-Sun. By Vachel Lindsay. D. Appleton and Co.
Narratives in Verse. By Ruth Comfort Mitchell. D. Appleton and Co.
Contemporary German Poetry, An Anthology. Chosen and translated by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

AS TO THE SHORT STORY

By Ben Ames Williams

MR. O'BRIEN'S book on the short story suffers under a serious defect; it has an ill fitting title. Perhaps Mr. O'Brien's original purpose was to discover and demonstrate the advance of the short story; but to at least one reader it seems that he has abandoned this plan, has on the whole been content with presenting a chronology rather than an interpretation. It is always dangerous to say that an art has advanced; there are grounds for asserting that art is universal and immutable and eternal. It is certainly a misuse of the word to speak of an "advance" from Washington Irving to Sherwood Anderson.

The great body of this book is composed of summary comments upon the work of something like a hundred and thirty writers of short stories. These comments are of doubtful value, because they are in most cases very brief, and because they are put forward without sufficient elucidation or justification, and therefore carry no particular conviction. They hurt the book as a whole because they have left insufficient space for the detailed critical writing of which Mr. O'Brien is capable.

The introductory chapters offer an example of this. Mr. O'Brien classifies short stories as dependent for their appeal on "type" characters, on local color, on plot, or on surprise. The reader receives the impression that he has condemned all stories which base their appeal for interest on such grounds; yet he does not take space sufficiently to explain or justify this condemnation. Certainly a good argument may be made for characters, for local color, for plot, and even for surprise. As long ago as Aristotle's time, some at least of these elements were considered essential to good fiction. Mr. O'Brien, perhaps through lack of space, seems to put himself into the position of damning the well constructed story; I do not believe this is really his attitude.

The evil inherent in the scheme of the book is more apparent after one has read the chapter on Henry James, or the passage dealing with Sherwood Anderson. These are fine; they are interpretative, illuminating criticism of what seems to me to be a very high type. Certainly one of the ends of criticism is to stimulate the appreciation of good things; these passages in Mr. O'Brien's book do serve that end. If he had given an equal amount of space, and an equal amount of insight, to Irving, Hawthorne, Poe, Harte, O. Henry, and Irvin Cobb, his book would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be, I believe, immensely more valuable. But he has wasted good white paper on a hundred or more writers who, whether they are important or not, merely clutter up the book, take Mr. O'Brien's time and space, and leave no definite impression upon the reader. If John Smith, who wrote three stories of some promise, deserves a paragraph, then Henry James deserves a volume; but Mr. O'Brien gives Smith his paragraph, gives Henry James only a chapter. He has sought to take in too much territory. . . .

As a treatise on the short story this book seems to me of little value; as a chronology of short story writers it is probably sufficiently complete. But it is worth having, and worth reading, if only for the sake of the criticisms of Henry James and Sherwood Anderson. These, and particularly the latter, seem to me intelligible, informative, and interesting. They are criticisms worthy of the name.

The Advance of the American Short Story. By Edward J. O'Brien. Dodd, Mead and Co.

TWO CRITICS

By Robert Littell

MR. VAN DOREN is far more readable than Georg Brandes. Mr. Van Doren is fair, open minded, curious; he loves nature, the south, and his fellow beings; he hates injustice, stupidity, hypocrisy; he writes well; his phrases are, most liberally, well turned, and on top of that carefully stained and varnished; indeed his dignified and matter of fact piece of furniture is well worth a place in the critical room. Mr. Van Doren is far more readable than Georg Brandes, yet neither of them is what you would honestly call readable. They are not, in a sense, hard to read: they are neither of them difficult resisting nuts which must stubbornly be cracked open before their meat may be tasted. It is rather Mr. Van Doren's misfortune that he is too easy to read to be wholly readable. This misfortune goes deeper than a mere question of readability. Take Mr. Van Doren's first piece in the book, his bow, his opening inning in which his canniest sluggers are supposedly stepping one by one to the plate. "Criticism", he says, "ordinarily asks about literature one of three questions: 'Is it good?'" (Ball one.) "'Is it true?'" (Ball two.) "'Is it beautiful?'" (Ball three.) Now it is time to tell you that the title of the essay is "A Fourth Dimension in Criticism". You see where we are coming out: other critics have measured literature with their poor instruments, and in their hands she is a mere mean cubic thing; Mr. Van Doren is about to give her that divine super earthly halo of a fourth dimension. Now quiet everybody. This is the big one. The pitcher winds up. Mr. Van Doren is fidgeting with his ash.

Not a peanut is heard to fall. We are due for a home run at least. The pitcher rewinds. At last the ball shoots through the air. A home run? Alas, no! STRIKE ONE!

For Mr. Van Doren's fourth dimensional measurement of a piece of literature is to ask of it the question: "Is it alive?"

So far the beautiful girls of this world who have been talked about so much by their admirers have been discussed only three dimensionally. People have asked about Helen or Lukomorya one of three questions: "Is she good?", "Is she beautiful?", "Is she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

true?" But I, dear reader, I am the first critic of the fair sex to come along and ask the really important question: "Is she alive?"

No, the real trouble is that Mr. Van Doren lacks a sense of humor, that sense without which all the others, so many of which Mr. Van Doren amply possesses, are meat without salt. Otherwise he would not say that Clarence Day, Jr. is "primarily an anthropologist", nor dare to begin a sentence, "One of the commonest devices in fiction is . . ." He lacks also that longing to burrow far beneath surface truth which marks the difference between recording and understanding. He burrows, to be sure; he is honest, painstaking, and a skeptic, but these qualities incline him to reject lies rather than seek far for the truth. He shares with Georg Brandes the, to me, discouraging fondness for paddling round and round a man or a subject as if it were an island, seeing many delightful vistas, but never penetrating through dubious thickets to its heart.

I'd rather read Mr. Van Doren than Georg Brandes any day. Brandes's long essays (very badly translated by the way) are an example of the confusion between information and scholarship which has done the latter so much damage in reputation. They are a gradual, complete, and miscellaneous unloading, upon a finally buried subject, of facts, dates, names, quotations, fancies, theories, speculations, drenched with amiability. At his worst, Brandes reads like the obituary in a local paper — "Flaubert was a prose author of the first rank." His virtue is, by enormous knowledge and industry, to have made the heap a rich one; but if you want the truth, you must do your own digging in that heap.

It is indeed rather strange that Brandes should be considered as a critic at all. His is the expository, the historical, the biographical rather than the critical method. Not that really good biography is not often the best criticism: witness Mr. Strachey. But Brandes's biography is far more the "he was born at Linoleumville in 1869 and was not accounted brilliant as a child" variety. And surely few so called critics have been so uncritical. I do not mean this praise or perfunctory eulogy — there is plenty of that in these essays ("Flaubert's name is synonymous with artistic earnestness and literary rigor" . . . "The overwhelming mastership, the wonderful virtuosity of Swinburne"...). I mean rather that blindness to the core of truth which is shown in his incurable tendency to refine away the inexplicable and at the same time include so much of the merely unexplained.

Creative Spirts of the Nineteenth Century. By Georg Brandes, translated by Rasmus B. Anderson. T. Y. Crowell Co.
The Roving Critic. By Carl Van Doren. Alfred A. Knopf.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

JUDGING from the number of travel books that annually shower forth, one wonders whether everyone that goes on a trip feels it necessary to make the details public. And judging from the quality of many of these books, one cannot but hope that the authors were more successful as tourists than they have been as writers. These reflections are aroused by Edmund Blunden's volume on "The Bonadventure" (Putnam), which the subtitle describes as "A Random Journal of an Atlantic Holiday". Though this designation is correct, it is incomplete; the book might more appropriately be characterized as "A Random Journal of an Uninteresting Holiday". For Mr. Blunden fails to put any glow or color into his narrative; he describes his experiences in a way that may be vastly entertaining to himself, but that leaves the reader cold; he tells, in some detail, of a voyage to South America, but does not make it much more entertaining than a voyage from New York to Hoboken might be.

Joseph Caillaux, former Premier of France, is not content with halfway measures for the resurrection of Europe. In his "Whither France? Whither Europe?" (Knopf) he suggests nothing less than "to combine Western democracy and Russian sovietism". Only through such a union, he contends, only through a "revolutionary reconstruction", can Europe be saved from disintegrating utterly in the pit to which she has fallen partially as a result of the war, partially as the outcome of political bickerings, the shortsightedness of statesmen, an artificially inflamed nationalism, the deflation of currencies, the establishment of unnatural economic barriers, and the continued predominance of the military spirit. Though the remedy suggested by M. Caillaux is perhaps one to frighten the timid, yet he makes out an excellent case and has written a book that every thoughtful student of present day affairs will want to read.

The Parisian and the sophisticated smell of violets are at once apparent to the reader in Paul Géraldy's "You and Me" (Boni, Liveright). Being essentially Parisian himself M. Géraldy must, to a great extent, peer knowingly at love. It is all at his finger tips. His poems range from heaven to the outermost limbo with equal facility and unconcern; you feel that he would be much obliged to anyone who could explain some little feature — some little fantastic anticlimax that he has missed. It is only natural that such poetry, while undeniably well done and entertaining, must necessarily have such little weight as to be rather insignificant. Still, this probably is exactly what M. Géraldy hopes for — a seat on the left hand side of Parnassus.

"Crucibles of Crime" by Joseph F. Fishman (Cosmopolis) presents a picture of the American jail so appalling that only its authenticity can vanquish the reader's desire to discredit it. Mr. Fishman has for many years been the Inspector of Prisons for the United States government. In this

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book, however, he writes about jails, the technical distinction between a jail and a prison being that unconvicted persons and those sentenced to confinement for a comparatively short period — from a month to a year — are sent to jail. The first amazing fact to be envisaged, and discountenanced, is that the federal government has no jails of its own and must, therefore, board its prisoners in state and county institutions. The second, far more malignant, fact, to the exposition of which this book is devoted, is that practically all the jails in the country, with the exception of those in Michigan and Pittsburg, are absolutely unhygienic, barbarously organized, foul, and pernicious in the influence they exercise on the prisoners and, through them, on the community. "Crucibles of Crime" is not a melodramatic title; the facts bear it out. The reader is compelled to concur in the author's conclusion that the American jails, instead of punishing and correcting criminals, incite them, through enforced idleness and vicious practices, to a continuance of their unsocial habits, and spread crime and disease through the nation. Furthermore, Mr. Fishman suggests remedies that are scientifically efficient and simple to carry out.

"Finding the Worth While in California" by Charles Francis Saunders (McBride) will prove valuable to the tourist unfamiliar with the west, for it is a compilation of facts regarding the cities, forests, lakes, mountains, and pleasure resorts of California. The book is a brief one, and the author's method, accordingly, is necessarily sketchy; but he covers the main points of interest, not adequately for one in quest of knowledge, but sufficiently, on the whole, for the traveler in search of a guide book. As Mr. Saunders himself declares, "What may be deemed worth while in any region is naturally to a great extent a question of individual taste and temperament." For this reason, one will pardon the author an occasional oversight, and will even excuse him when he disposes of Golden Gate Park, certainly one of the most magnificent city parks in the country, with the brief and conventional appellation of "beautiful".

Though it is an interesting departure from woman's traditional "conspiracy of silence" concerning the feminine psychology, Helen Jerome's "The Secret of Woman" (Boni, Liveright) reveals nothing strikingly new, nothing that has been unknown to male psychologists. Like many of them, Miss Jerome considers woman's sex psychology — from the motives for her much censured use of cosmetics to her reaction to the marriage relationship — to be the only really significant phase of her mental life. This book, directed primarily against H. L. Mencken's and Otto Weininger's estimates of women, achieves neither the scientific thoroughness of the Austrian nor the clever irony of the American — it is simply an entertaining, popularly written appraisal of women by a woman.

In these days of marathon jazz dancing there may be some value in noting that Tut-Ankh-Amen's people were admonished to use every day for pleasure — if less joy in being reminded that King Psammeticlus, "the Mixer", the inventor of "mixed drinks", seems to have "taken the count" forever! More seriously, if there isn't method in the old Egyptian

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

notion of placing with each mummy his portrait for his soul to return to in case the body disintegrate first, together with imitations in stone, clay, or wood of the food that may also more quickly spoil — there certainly seems to be. Professor W. Max Müller's "Egyptian Mythology" (Marshall Jones) is a timely reminder of the poetry, greed, humor, humanness, aspiration equally prevalent in young ages as in our decrepit one.

Robert Haven Schauffler is no new poet. His "Scum o' the Earth" was received well enough to make him known among those who watch the minor groups as they come and go. He has taken what he considers the best verses from that volume and from "The White Comrade" and with them has associated some new work — all of them forming "Magic Flame" (Houghton Mifflin). Through the new verses in this book is the same spirit that marks the older ones. Nor is there any startling change in technique. Those who enjoyed his other books will probably enjoy this in the same measure.

A man who was one of the brilliant wits of his time, a diplomat, a financier, a bit of a liar and an accomplished heartbreaker, a social climber, a dramatist of talent and a man of expansive good humor — such a person is surely the ideal subject for a biography. In "Figaro: The Life of Beaumarchais" (Dutton) John Rivers has found him and made him memorable. The scope of Beaumarchais's life is so wide as to embrace many of the important features of life in France under its last king, and the book includes a glimpse of court life and a good look at the Paris of the eighteenth century. It is written in a pleasant style with occasional flashes of humor and a scholarly attention to detail. Its main fault is a certain topheaviness, due to a strong emphasis on one or two events of seemingly secondary importance.

Literature — the contemporary literature of Harry Kemp, Heywood Broun, and Booth Tarkington — and life — the life of New York's own dear peculiarities, seen gaily and colorfully — furnish the stuff of "In the Neighborhood of Murray Hill" by Robert Cortes Holliday (Doran). Mr. Holliday is not merely a keen observer; he is something of an antiquarian, too, with reference to New York's skyline, Fifth Avenue social topography, the publishing business, and the Bohemia of the old Greenwich Village. All his abundantly garnered facts he scans with a humorous and jolly eye, and communicates them in picturesque little essays, slight in texture, but clearly individualized by a bright and somewhat mannered style.

The marked favor enjoyed by Lincoln literature this season has revived Luther Emerson Robinson's "Abraham Lincoln as a Man of Letters" (Putnam), originally published in 1918. Professor Robinson's analysis and portrayal of Lincoln's natural growth in culture is based upon an exhaustive chronological study of his addresses and letters. Lincoln is presented as a literary genius who wrote "flawless sentences" in which every word made a definite contribution to the coherence and thought; as a lover of poetry, especially of Shakespeare and Byron; and as a poet who wrote rhythmical prose. The appendix includes numerous selections from Lincoln's works, among them his "handbill" for reelection to the Illinois

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

legislature in 1836 — his only known declaration in support of woman suffrage.

A remarkably thoughtful and able analysis of capitalism is given in "The Decay of Capitalist Civilization" (Harcourt, Brace) by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. In a clear and convincing manner they have shown the process by which capitalism came about, the benefits at first derived by it, and its subsequent evils. The book is not concerned with a constructive plan for the lessening of poverty and inequality but hopes by a logical consideration of facts to make for a better understanding between conservatives and liberals.

"Bubbles of Gold" (Dutton) by Arthur Crew Inman is just one of those books of verse which leave no appreciable mark on the literary record. Rhymes and free verse are in almost equal proportion, with no unusual originality in either. Most of them are love songs — Harlequin to Columbine.

Very much above the average is Algernon Tassin's "The Oral Study of Literature" (Knopf). It is a protest against the customary method of teaching English composition by means of excessive and laborious writing on the part of the student. In order to write good English, Professor Tassin believes, one must tune one's ear to the rhythm of well constructed sentences. His book is really an anthology of poetry and prose, but far more alive and interesting than such collections usually are, since it dispenses with stereotyped reflections on beauty, virtue, and the satisfaction of making a good end. Instead it risks giving the young a few ideas and includes such modern writers as Mencken.

In the preface to his collection of essays, "As I Was Saying" (Marshall Jones), Horace James Bridges acknowledges that the principles and faith by which he lives are contained therein. This is another way, the reader finds, of saying that the author is possessed of understanding, poise, and serene wisdom. Some of the essays are biographical. Mark Twain's pessimism, Samuel Butler's satire, and Tyrell's religion are brilliantly analyzed in these essays of the first type. Others deal with such general topics as spiritualism, worry, and the tyranny of books. In the last named essay, the reader finds temptation to cheer loudly over Mr. Bridges's fling at "lecture drunkards" who get a "wide" culture in pemmican form from Dr. Ignoratio Elenchi et al. This book is not for the pemmican eaters. It is a discourse about authors for those who have read them, and a discussion of topics of spiritual import for other thinkers along those tautly drawn lines.

With a perspective of more than half a century, and with the present availability of many documents and records that were until recently sealed, the historian of today is far better able to judge the Second Empire and its founder than were his contemporaries. In "Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France, 1848-1856" (Longmans, Green), as in his previous study of the earlier years of the great Napoleon's nephew, F. A. Simpson has made full use of all the newly opened sources. As a result this volume gives an unusually illuminating picture of those eight years of French history, especially of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the conduct of the *coup d'état*, and of the beginnings, course, and results of the Crimean War and the ensuing peace. For the student there are many valuable references, and a very complete bibliography.

It is unfortunate that Thomas H. Dickinson should have allowed his first two chapters to be included in "The United States and the League" (Dutton), an otherwise well informed and ably argued thesis. These raise a barrier of prejudice and distrust, either against their author's integrity or his most fundamental intelligence. One other observation: even high school debaters know that a team can give away all its points but its big one, yet win. But perhaps if Professor Dickinson had realized the significance of these little elementary complications he would, like the wise shoemaker, still be sticking "solely" to his true calling: enthusiastic and competent support of the modern drama. Not all of us yet approve with Professor Dickinson such facts as this: "The United States has consistently stood for the right of the Great Powers to regulate the affairs of the world." It does not seem "consistent" with "self-determination".

Jesse Lee Bennett's "On 'Culture' and 'A Liberal Education'" (Arnold) is directed at a mentally refractory world. After Mr. Bennett has finished his essay on culture, et cetera, he appends an imposing list of books which shows just how far neglected has been our cultural education. It is an interesting list. We freely admit we haven't read some of the titles listed therein, but are going to: we are going to draw "The Rise of Silas Lapham" out of the library — tomorrow.

A poetic and very inviting plea for bridging the rift between worldly matters and the religious spirit is set forth in Henry Dwight Sedgwick's "Pro Vita Monastica" (Atlantic). The method advocated is the cultivation of a certain aloofness and serenity of spirit by regular seasons of thought, prayer, and "the society of books and flowers". It is a timely book, since realism nowadays too often means pouncing on the nearest and the reddest bricks as missiles or building material for life and literature. Perhaps it draws too much upon the lives of saints who lived in simpler eras. Stylistically, it harks back to Cardinal Newman with whose philosophy and whose sonorous swing of rhythm it is strongly infused.

A. Hyatt Verrill has written a book on pirates and buccaneers, admittedly the scum of the earth; a book that tells of deeds more cruel and uncalled for than any perpetrated by the Spanish Inquisition. He calls it "The Real Story of the Pirate" (Appleton) and attempts to justify it by saying that "England would have been hard pressed to retain her hold on the New World" without the aid of these cutthroats, and that we should be grateful to them for their aid in bringing about "the downfall of Spain's sea power".

"Fox Footprints" by Elizabeth J. Coatsworth (Knopf) is a book of frail but for the most part exquisite verse that may well be precious to any lover of poetry. It possesses the delicate precision of imagery, the harmony of color and mood, the simple but magic rhythms that are the author's acknowledged gifts. It is disappointing only when contrasted with translations from Chinese and Japanese

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poetry, of which it is a shadow. Miss Coatsworth catches the spirit of the Orient, but it is, after all, foreign to her. That she is able at times to transmute it into poetry is proof of her sensitive and trained vision and the perfected pliability of her medium. Many of these poems are written in a free verse form that, but for its long and recurrent rhythm, is perilously close to prose; and this experimentation seems a pity on the part of one who uses established rhythms and fitting rhymes with an almost unfailing loveliness. But occasionally the very essence of the elusive Orient informs a lyric or moves a minute and mysteriously poignant drama. Such poems as "The Inviolable", "Exile", and "Peony" remain luminous in the reader's mind.

Prohibition as "a phantom", "a thief in the night", which "punishes a vast multitude of us", is the particular brand of stimulant Charles Hanson Towne in "The Rise and Fall of Prohibition" (Macmillan) dispenses. His supposition that we have "20,000,000 males and 10,000,000 females who drink, at least in moderation", is an excellent example of the sort of compliment he pays us as a people. He claims that "drunkenness is rampant in the land, as it never has been", and indicts all who support the particular Constitutional amendment he attacks as "pathological" persons "who, themselves, should be in wards, if not in padded cells".

The portraits of "Spoon River" folk are supplemented in Josephine Craven Chandler's "The Spoon River Country" (Illinois State Historical Society) with further details of the lives of Lucinda Matlock, Sevigne Houghton, and other sturdy pioneers of the Anthology. The work has been undertaken in a scholarly spirit, and fulfils its purpose of assisting the admirers of Edgar Lee Masters to a more complete comprehension of his work. It does more than that. It adds to the reader's store of anecdotes about Lincoln and Douglas, tells hundreds of homely incidents of the Civil War period, gives a detailed account of ecclesiastical architecture in Illinois of the 'fifties, touches upon Indian life, river commerce, and society of the "shirt sleeve" days. This is a well told chapter of pioneer history in Illinois.

Cyrus K. Curtis, who was before his death publisher and owner of the Curtis publications, is the subject of Mr. Bok's latest work revealing the manner in which poor boys may become rich. After reading "The Americanization of Edward Bok" one had an instinctive feeling that as the author had done unto himself so would he eventually do unto someone else. "A Man From Maine" (Scribner) is the result. Almost any man's life is interesting; with this charitable thought you follow the journalistic adventures of the late Mr. Curtis. Just as you expected, he published a school paper — and just as you expected, he made money from it. In spite of Mr. Bok's very evident desire to throw roses and dandelions from the wings, he has at least given the world a conventional picture of a man in whom many people are very likely interested.

At the opening of the first page of "Wild Animal Homesteads" by Enos A. Mills (Doubleday, Page), the reader is transported into a fascinating animal world. There is many a thrill to be had in knowing the splendid

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grizzly (Mr. Mills has always been a vigorous champion of this great beast) and in hearing of the supreme bravery of the mother grizzly in defending her young. The beaver and his summer holiday, the skunk and his solemn mien, the coyote, the porcupine — these and other roaming, yet home loving wild animals, are made to seem enormously worth while. We finish the last page with sorrow at the thought of Enos Mills's death, for we had hoped that the vivid books of this author-naturalist would be forthcoming for many years.

Demetra Vaka (Mrs. Kenneth-Brown) has made the Near East her literary milieu in various interesting books. "The Veiled Ladies of Stamboul" (Houghton Mifflin) offers vivid American reactions, not at all marred by a Greek birth complex, upon the physical and psychic life of the present day Turkish woman of the better classes. The sabred eunuch has been powerless to guard the erstwhile harem door against the obtrusion of ideals of woman's rights and active participation in the development of that national and political rebirth implied by the Turkey of Kemal Pasha. Reading Demetra Vaka's book, one gains a better understanding of the Turkish soul of today, especially the feminine one. The reader will find her pen pictures even more enjoyable if he hark back, for the sake of contrast, to Pierre Loti's "Aziyadé" and "Fantôme d'Orient", with their atmospheric evocations of the veiled ladies of only fifty years ago.

In "Joshua Trees" (Marshall Jones) Frederick Mortimer Clapp displays himself as a lover of words more for their visual than for their oral value. These poems have very fine and clipped edges, but there is no design apparent; if the craftsman knew what he was about he does not show it. He has no rhythm and is content to transmute the visible scene in eccentric language, the language of a mood, an occasion. . . . Goethe says that there is only one sort of poetry, that of circumstance, and a French writer, commenting on this in "Le Figaro", says: "Evidently whether I am loving, unhappy, exalted or depressed the poem that I write will be one of circumstance . . . for me. But it risks never becoming a poem for others unless I have genius." What that writer inferred is that genius is a quality of universality which makes a personal emotion impersonal and apparent. It is this quality that Mr. Clapp's work, and indeed the work of many of our young writers, seems to lack. And then they complain that the public is stupid. Are they, with their hiatuses and suspension points, trying to develop imagination in their public? The answer to that is that the public is full of hiatuses and suspension points. The duty of these young men is to fill in the blanks.

Life in two worlds, Africa and England, has given Llewelyn Powys the matter for "Ebony and Ivory" (American Library Service), an unusual collection of sketches, poetic in content and language, though prose in external form. They are written in a minor key, these stories and impressions of a world full of suffering, brutality, death, and decay. Mr. Powys is a realist — his years in Africa have taught him the futility of dissimulation and sugarcoating. The searchlight of truth, like the blazing sun of the tropics, discovers the hopelessness of all being and doing. Yet this pessimism is not harsh; it is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rather a gentle undercurrent of melancholy — growing sometimes poignantly pathetic, as in "Rubbish" and "The Wryneck"; again, as in "A Leopard by Lake Elmenteita", tingeing but faintly the brilliant colors of a vivid landscape.

A prime minister is usually a hero to his biographer, and Lloyd George is a particularly dangerous specimen to whose fascinations Frank Dilnot has succumbed completely. His "Lloyd George" (Harper) is a second edition of a book which appeared in 1917 and to which he has added three chapters bringing it up to date. The subtitle is "The Man and His Story", and in fact the book is written in the highly colored, highly dramatic manner of a children's story, in which the incidents and motives are oversimplified to the point of inaccuracy.

In "William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon" (Dutton) Emile Legouis gives a painstaking account of Wordsworth's youthful love affair. Professor Legouis is doubtless correct in believing that it throws considerable light upon some of Wordsworth's poems; what is less certain, however, is whether it adds to our enjoyment of them. One fault in an otherwise admirable piece of work (of its kind) is the overapologetic attitude of the author. He offers far too many explanations and excuses for the moral lapse, assures us that it was the only one, and concludes that it helped to make Wordsworth a better man.

A reissue of the "Poems of Arthur O'Shaughnessy", selected and edited by William Alexander Percy (Yale), has now after a lapse of thirty years appeared; it will find favor with those readers who have a foible for Victorian poetry (a predilection strengthened, probably, by their dislike of free verse) and who do not demand the vitality, emotional and artistic, infused into it by masters. O'Shaughnessy is a minor poet, but he should not therefore be neglected. If his verse lacks the perfected blending of meaning and form which constitutes Swinburne's power, that does not mean it has not a spontaneity and grace of its own. His songs exert a languid and tender charm, and in "Chaitivel", "Silences", and other scattered verses there is a yearning music that leads us into those fantastic heavens that solaced his heart. The editor has omitted not only many of the poems, but in several instances parts of the poems reprinted. Such excision is his prerogative, but it may be resented both by readers who already have a fondness for O'Shaughnessy and by those who are eager to become acquainted with him. Others may be grateful for being spared the effort of culling out the best from the poet's complete works and for being given the opportunity to enjoy him at his finest.

"The personal quest for a rich and consistent doctrine of human values and purposes and for an understanding of the meaning of human life as a whole is the essence of philosophizing." So declares Joseph A. Leighton, whose "The Field of Philosophy" (Appleton) contains an introductory chapter in which the author deplores the present day revolt against thought, the widespread repudiation of reason, the tendency to act as though a philosophy of life were unnecessary to him who would conduct himself consistently and with sanity. The book as a whole constitutes "an introduction to the study of philosophy", and makes an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elementary survey of the entire subject, treating of philosophy both ancient and modern in a way that illustrates Professor Leighton's theory that the best method of instruction is through "a combination of the historical and the topical or systematic methods".

The reason why "Men of the Inner Jungle" by W. F. Alder (Century) seems to us a successful book is because the reader too gets into the strange, beautiful, brutal jungle of Borneo. This volume makes us see and feel; we laugh, and we even want to cry out in protest at the cruelty indulged in by the natives during the feast at Hanangan. Strange customs, unique conventions, distorted legends, including the one of the Creation, are to be found in that jungle world. There too the younger generation make love — and the older ones retire early.

Richer and with a maturer insight than his earlier poems had, John Drinkwater's "Preludes" (Houghton Mifflin) is one of the best of the spring's poetry publications. Its author is not in Masefield's class, there is some trace of effort not entirely inspired, but beauty and a dramatic instinct are present in a high degree, especially in the brief lyrics and the longer Biblical narrative, "The Maid of Naaman's Wife".

"Psychoanalysis in Words of One Syllable" should be the title of James Oppenheim's "Your Hidden Powers" (Knopf), for to simplify that difficult study is what Mr. Oppenheim has here attempted. Turning from mystic poetry, he wrote these extremely simple, very interesting, instructive but not wholly scientific essays for serial publication in the Los Angeles "Times". Gathered into a book, they are not altogether coherent and grow a bit thin toward the end. The sexual basis of psychoanalysis is rather lightly treated by a sort of tactful poetizing unusual among writers in this field. A far more thorough and partly mystical explanation of the unconscious forms the most important and best part of the book. The division of all persons into four types is, of course, arbitrary, but it is a useful scheme and helps even the least trained intelligence to follow the twisted path of this new science.

Those who have enjoyed Anatole France's "Little Pierre" will be glad to learn that the succeeding chapters of the great Frenchman's life story are now obtainable in a faithful English translation by James Lewis May. "The Bloom of Life" (Dodd, Mead) is a "brilliant museum" of separate and classically clear cut views of the author's youth, presented under a genial pretense of anonymity. There is nothing world shaking nor even much that shows France's usual critical keenness in these pages, which are intentionally — and rightly — "filled with little things portrayed with great exactitude." Nevertheless one senses abundant charm and discovers mines of wisdom in the sketches of the boy himself, his fat mathematics master and his ugly classical tutor, his dear, old-world parents and their brilliant intimate M. Dubois, Pierre's modernist godfather M. Danquin, his two or three calf loves, and above all his schoolmates' "Academy" whose inaugural solemnities broke up in a boisterous row. Over all broods the atmosphere of the Paris of the Second Empire, a quieter, more rustic, more artistic city than the fashion centre of the twentieth century.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

Two titles new to the monthly score stand out in the May reports. One is Papini's "Life of Christ", the other Arthur Train's "His Children's Children". Nothing could better illustrate the catholicity of library readers' tastes than this simultaneous acceptance of two books so widely divergent in character. Except for the usual shiftings of position there is no other change in the month's lists.

Comment having been made on occasion upon the nationality of the authors represented in these monthly scores, it may be noted here that the authors named in the fiction list this month are as preponderantly American as they are the reverse in the general list. Only Hugh Walpole, A. S. M. Hutchinson, and the anonymous "Elizabeth" of "The Enchanted April" are foreign born; every one of the other seven is not only American but, in his or her peculiar way, typically American. In the general list appear only three native American authors, Messrs. Hendrick and Robinson and Mrs. Post. To be sure, this coincidence is robbed of all special significance by the indisputable fact that Franklin K. Lane, a Canadian, and Edward Bok, a Netherlander, are even more "typically" American than many native born writers, to say nothing of that other Dutchman, Hendrik Van Loon. To those who think that art has national boundaries — like the zealous young library assistant who meticulously corrected the card index by removing Bernard Shaw and Joseph Conrad from the classification of "English Literature" and putting them in the "Irish" and "Polish" files, respectively — such details are tremendously significant. To the rest of us they are at least idly entertaining, and are presented with no more serious idea of their importance.

—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	BONI
2.	The Cathedral	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
3.	The Dim Lantern	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
4.	The Enchanted April	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
5.	Babbitt	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
6.	Wanderer of the Wasteland	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
7.	This Freedom	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE
8.	His Children's Children	*Arthur Train*	SCRIBNER
9.	One of Ours	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
10.	The Bright Shawl	*Joseph Hergesheimer*	KNOPF

GENERAL

1.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
2.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
3.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
4.	The Outline of Science	*J. Arthur Thomson*	PUTNAM
5.	Life of Christ	*Giovanni Papini*	HARCOURT
6.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
7.	The Story of Mankind	*Hendrik Van Loon*	BONI
8.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	BONI
9.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
10.	The Letters of Franklin K. Lane	*Lane and Wall*	DOUBLEDAY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

To the Editor of The Bookman:

The letter of Mr. Ben Ames Williams in the May Bookman in turn begins to make "a red haze dance before my eyes". I write as a layman who makes his living by that vague occupation known as journalism. I am, in short, a hack. I make my living by keeping in touch with what is going on in the world of contemporary literature, music, and the other arts. I do practical work in a Broadway theatre. I devour books and magazines by the ton. I consider myself neither a critic nor a creator of fiction. Therefore I am outside the arena looking on, without prejudices toward one side or the other, without any ax to grind. Simply an observer, and perhaps for that reason qualified to have opinions.

Mr. Williams objects to the assertion that short story writing is a lost art. Well, there are qualifications to be made. First, it is not a lost art in Europe. Second, it is, in America, not so much a lost art as an art degenerated into a machine made product, as thoroughly standardized as Henry Ford's flivvers. Here and there originality feebly raises its blighted head, but on the whole it has a bad time. Changing the figure, it is as difficult to find a place for originality (even sincerity perhaps) in the great American short story machine as it is to use a Rolls-Royce carburetor on a Ford motor.

A hint of what is the matter with the American short story may be found in the review of "Georgian Short Stories, 1922" by Blanche Colton Williams in the May Bookman. Now Miss Williams is, I understand, the queen of the advocates of the standardized short story. She conducts classes in the "art" at Columbia University. Ambitious young men and women clamor for admittance. She is a technical expert. She is extremely successful. Her students get five hundred dollars or more for their short stories. She teaches them to write exactly what editors of the popular fiction magazines want.

But since when can the "art" of short story writing be taught as you would give a chauffeur a course in motor mechanics?

Clearly Miss Williams finds the popular American standard the ultimate in short story writing. She says, for example, that most readers will agree that the stories chosen from the works of six given British authors by Mr. O'Brien for his collection of "Best British Short Stories" are superior to the six by the same authors in "Georgian Short Stories". I, as one of "most readers", disagree. The six chosen by Mr. O'Brien are good enough short stories but they lack the spark that illuminates the six in the "Georgian" collection. About the stories of Mr. O'Brien's choice there is a strong flavor of familiarity. They fit a single formula pretty closely. They are pattern made and therefore art. Any American editor would have bought them. That seems to have been the deciding element in Miss Williams's criticism.

She objects to "The Coach" and "The Tryst" in the Georgian collection because they are "heavy with the odor of death". She intimates that the stories by D. H. Lawrence and Oliver Onions in the same volume are poor stories because they deal with insanity. After all, both death and insanity are always with us. They are a part of life. Must we ignore them because they are not pretty? Or because there is in them a small chance of formulated sentimentality?

Miss Williams gives away one of the ingredients of her formula when she writes that "No story can survive without two essentials. The first is motive, or the basis upon which narrative structure rests, etc., etc."

Now if she means what I think she means, she would cast aside without consideration virtually the entire creative output of such artists as Katherine Mansfield, Joseph Conrad, and Anton Chekhov. "A story", she adds, "is . . . a thing of action, nicely coordinate to an end."

Turning from factory to market, I have heard with my own ears the advice given from time to time to ambitious young writers by editors and literary brokers (sic), not second rate men but the best in their field. (Names furnished on request.) Some of these gems, I have recorded in a diary. Among them are these, chosen at random:

(1) "The trouble with you is that you know too much. You are too clever. You must remember that a short story is not a work of art like a picture, to be bought and hung on a wall. It is an article of commerce and a necessity, to be sold like a washbowl."

(2) "Why did you kill Mazie [a character in the story]? The only time you should kill a character accidentally by a bullet meant for someone else is when the character happens to be a villain and must

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be removed without soiling the hands of the hero or heroine." In other words, people are never killed accidentally in real life and the good ones never die. "They only fydes awy!"

(3) "You shouldn't have a street walker in this story even if she is a spy and a bad egg. No one will ever buy it." By "no one", the gentleman in question meant the magazines which pay the highest rates.

(4) "I suppose if you wrote a good salable story, you would be ashamed of it and sign it with a nom de plume. Sincerity and style doesn't count. You must learn to write the stuff they're used to."

(5) "There is a certain place for a climax and it should always be where people expect it."

And so on, indefinitely.

Mr. Williams, in his letter, has taken up the cudgels for "The Saturday Evening Post", using as his foremost argument the supposition that George Horace Lorimer would treat kindly the ten short stories Mr. Williams names as classics. His argument is based only upon supposition and therefore a decidedly weak one. I am certain that if the ten were submitted to the S. E. P. under the names of unknown writers their fate would not be so happy a one as that held out by the optimistic Mr. Williams.

The trouble with the American short story is the same trouble which afflicts the American theatre in a lesser degree. It is a difficulty which William A. Brady courageously pointed out at the recent tumultuous dinner of the Drama League. It lies not with the editor, nor the short story writer, nor the dramatist, nor the theatrical manager. The trouble lies with the great public which cries for the food the editor and the producer give it. The public wants to be diverted and amused by stories conceived in a formula with which it is thoroughly familiar. As I heard a literary broker say recently, "It is not reality or an illusion of life the public wants. It wants simply a story which will serve as a means of escape from the humdrum of existence."

The theorists will say that art is what the mob, the greatest number, desires, and that stories made to please the mob are therefore great and distinguished. You might as well say that every comic strip was a great artistic achievement and every movie ground out in Hollywood. When the aim of magazines is a circulation of one hundred millions, the editors must cater to a few millions who have no possible standards of judgment or criticism, who are without background of any sort to aid them in sorting the wheat from the chaff. They must even cater to a few millions who are morons or little better. The editors must consider first, last, and all the time the fellow "who knows what he likes" and the fellow who wants to be amused when he is not discussing the price of soap with another drummer in the monotonous stretches of the journey from Peoria to Kankakee.

The editors and the commercially successful fictionists are quite right—beyond all doubt. But why drag in art?

LOUIS BROMFIELD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

My anecdote about a youthful misadventure of mine in criticism, in my article a few months ago on "Criticism and Bad Manners", was not intended as a "veiled attack" on Mr. Cale Young Rice. I had learned that it seemed so to him, offered him my apologies, and been very handsomely forgiven, by the time his letter to you, written in the first heat of righteous indignation, appeared in your pages. If your readers have gained the same impression from my anecdote that Mr. Rice did upon reading it, I am heartily sorry; and in any event, I am sorry to have seemed to Mr. Rice to be pursuing a youthful vendetta for such was not, and is not, my intention.

FLOYD DELL.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

THE BOOKMAN *presents the ninth instalment of its series of literary club programs. Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to evolve for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see* THE BOOKMAN *for October, November, December, January); II. Contemporary American Poetry; III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.*

The BOOKMAN *programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.*

The editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any questions confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Literary Club Service."*

THE group of poets presented this month forms the fifth part of a study program of present day poetry. The committee have tried, in mapping out this program, both to show the varying trends of modern American poetry and to combine these differing elements into some sort of ordered pattern which might be easily followed. For this reason, the poets whose work is to be considered have been divided into groups. ("The New England Group", consisting of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, and Amy Lowell, may be found in the March number. "The Middle Western Group", including Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, and Edgar Lee Masters, appeared in April. In May Anna Hempstead Branch, Sara Teasdale, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Grace Hazard Conkling formed the first half of the group of "Lyric Poets". The second half of the group, consisting of Louis Untermeyer, Witter Bynner, John Hall Wheelock, and William Rose Benét, was discussed in the June issue.) Of course, the same poet may belong to two or three groups. In such a case, the determining factor has been his most pronounced work.

The program is intended for a season's study. Yet in order not to make it too long, it has been considered wise to include only those poets already well known to the public. The committee wish it clearly understood that, in choosing these poets, every decision was made by ballot, the majority ruling.

The names of easily procurable books and magazine articles dealing with individual authors are listed after the account of the poet to whom they refer. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

References and Guides

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.
An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

Poetry in General

Convention and Revolt in Poetry. John Livingston Lowes. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
A Study of Poetry. Bliss Perry. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The Principles of English Versification. Paull F. Baum. HARVARD.
Lyric Forms from France. Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.
The American Rhythm. Mary Austin. HARCOURT, BRACE.

Anthologies

The New Poetry. Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson. MACMILLAN.
Modern American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.
A Miscellany of American Poetry, 1919. HARCOURT, BRACE.
American Poetry, 1922. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

Committee: Amy Lowell, chairman; Grace Hazard Conkling, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Sara Teasdale, Louis Untermeyer.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The appreciation of poetry is a most personal matter. The following program represents the painstaking effort of the above group of distinguished poets and critics. It includes only names of living Americans, and most of the younger poets were omitted as not having yet won their spurs. When this program was submitted for approval to the executive committee, suggestions and emendations were many. In few cases did the comments of any one member of the executive committee agree with those of another. For this reason, we have decided to publish the program as originally outlined by the poetry committee, without change. The biographies and quotations from critical material have been added by the editors of* THE BOOKMAN, *and for these the poetry committee is not responsible.*

The Imagists

H. D.

Hymen. HOLT.

One of the six poets who formed the nucleus of the imagist group, and were included in the three Imagist Anthologies, "H. D." is an almost perfect example of the writer of cadenced verse. Her passionate fondness for classical mood and form has led her into a clear, almost brittle style that for some people seems cold. Yet in these delicately fashioned lyrics of hers, there is a fire, a worship of beauty, strong, determined, whole souled, though subtle. Her rhythms are varied and graceful. These poems have often been likened to delicate yet strong Greek vases. She is pagan, yet she gives to old-world culture the freshness and vitality of the new world. Hers is a special and a rare gift, and one which it is important to appreciate and to understand if we would know the new school of poetry.

Hilda (Doolittle) Aldington is tall, dark, fragile, exceedingly shy. "Unworldly" is a proper adjective to use in describing her. She is as remote as her verses, yet withal kindly and interested. She was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was educated in private schools, and, for a time, at Bryn Mawr College. Her father was Professor Charles L. Doolittle, for some years director of the Flower Astronomical Observatory of the University of Pennsylvania. Her literary career started while she was in Europe. Contact with Ezra Pound and other members of the English and American group of literary experimentalists then living in London stimulated her. In America, her first work appeared in the January, 1913, num-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ber of "Poetry". She is married to the English poet and critic, Richard Aldington, also a member of the imagist school. "H. D." has spent much time of late years in Greece and on the continent. She has visited America seldom. She lives quietly, and writes constantly, though her output is small. Hers has been a quiet but a forceful influence in the development of American poetry.

"Her poems are native, personal, to a marked degree. They show no slightest trace of those influences which until recently ruled American art. Deeply affected by classic literature, still it is only as a blush of colour that we perceive it in her work. The tricks of her manner occasionally recall the Greek, but her thoughts are perfectly her own. Here is a fresh flower, sprung out of a new graft upon an old stock. Here is the frank, unartificial paganism of a new world. Neither in point of view, nor in technique, does this art resemble any preceding English art, yet it is cosmopolitan in that it is a fusion of much knowledge, all melted and absorbed in the blood of a young and growing race. She takes her good where she finds it, and the perfect singleness of her aim has resulted in releasing all her forces to concentrate them upon the simple fact of beauty. There is no clipping her pattern to a traditional mode; there is no staining it for ulterior ends. It is completely personal, completely sincere. Meticulous, at times, undoubtedly, 'H. D.'s faults are obvious enough, because they are also her greatest virtues; but, in the narrow compass in which she works, she has achieved a rare and finely-wrought beauty." — *Amy Lowell in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry".*

"'H. D.' is the most nearly perfect of the Imagists; she is, in fact, the only true Imagist. . . . In the narrow borders of her style she has achieved a concentration so great that it has an intensity of its own. . . . In 'Sea Garden' one notices at once how many and sensitive are 'H. D.'s perceptions of nature and how diverse are the rhythms she uses to express this keenness. Often her love for the beauty of an orchard, a pear-tree, a sea-rose is so great that it hurts her, and yet, with the artist's self-inflicted blows that wring ecstasy out of torture, she opens and reopens her wounds. . . . In all of these poems one receives the impression of something thin and fine struggling out of a narrow, compressed mold, of a gift used with a knowledge of its limitations, but with almost too sharp a precision and always with a quiet distinction of utterance." —*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"This ['Hymen'] is the first collection of H. D.'s verse to appear since the slender volume, 'Sea Garden', which was published four or five years ago. She has been called a 'Greek' in mood and temper because she has taken her symbols, to a very large extent, from the Hellenic world. The other portion of her themes are evoked as symbols from the natural objects and elements." — *The Boston "Transcript".*

REFERENCES:
Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Poems of H. D. May Sinclair. DIAL, February, 1922.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

Preludes and Symphonies. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Breakers and Granite. MACMILLAN.

Another member of the imagist group, John Gould Fletcher, is a poet of sound, color, and the motion of words. He is versatile and fertile. He has produced poems of the desert, of the mountains, of history, of philosophy, poems in cadenced verse, in polyphonic prose, in oriental forms. Primarily a poet of the beauty of nature, he yet occasionally turns to an examination of the soul of man; but his lyrics are seldom the reactions of personality. They are broad in scope. There is an almost epic quality to be found in some of his symphonic pieces.

This poet of tempestuous or brooding beauty was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1886. He lived there, was educated there until, in 1902, he was sent to Phillips Academy, Andover. At Harvard University he found the study of language his chief interest; but he left the academic atmosphere before taking his degree, in order to travel and to study. He spent some time in Venice and in Rome, then settled finally in London. He traveled in France, however, and made a deep study of modern French verse which has had a marked effect upon his later work. Five early volumes of verse were published in England. His later, more experimental work, however, was first presented in America. Although he has lived some years in Boston, he belongs to that group of Americans who have found London an ideal background for their life and work.

"Mr. Fletcher is a virtuoso of words, and sometimes this faculty runs away with him. Some of his symphonies, some of the poems in 'Irradiations', are heaped too full of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

words, the changes he rings are too heavy, he confuses too many colours, too many sounds. His enormous fecundity is responsible for this. It is hard for him to curb his exuberance. Nature has given him much, and it is difficult for him to put himself to school. His books would gain by being pruned; but, as I said in the beginning, he lacks the selective instinct. It is largely for this reason that he is not yet esteemed as he should be. But, for the discerning eye, no living poet has more distinction of vision or of style. In him, indeed, we see the beginning of that new order of which I have so often spoken. To the poet, he is a real teacher, indicating new directions, opening up untrodden ways of thought." — *Amy Lowell in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry".*

"The same thing may be said of John Gould Fletcher's poem on Lincoln. The first division of it is a complete poem in itself. It tells the story of Lincoln's life in terms of the life of the pine tree. And although the rhythms are similar, the several lines of the three strophes are unified and held together rather more by symbol than by the regular recurrence of stress in the flowing of the rhythm. . . . His ideal is not an ideal of speech in poetry. . . . He is an Imagist and believes that poetry is the setting forth of 'images' in rhythmical language in such a way as will make them stimulate emotion in the reader. His best work is excellent poetry, really felt, heartily imagined, adequately expressed in rhythm. One of the finest strophes he has written, and one quite typical of his genius, is the first in 'Irradiations'. It should be read aloud and with due regard for the pauses." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

"There is audible music in John Gould Fletcher's 'Preludes and Symphonies' that a majority of the free verse formists have failed to sound. He has something else, too, which makes his work exoteric— his descriptions are real." — THE BOOKMAN, *December, 1922.*

REFERENCES:

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

The Ironists

EZRA POUND

Lustra. KNOPF.

Scholarly, almost pedantic, playing in various accents and in many moods, Ezra Pound, from a brilliant young poet and critic, has become a somewhat bitter man of middle age. This should not obscure his undoubted brilliance. His work shows cleverness and wit. It has range. It often exhibits learning rather than feeling; but he has written beautiful and passionate lyrics as well as fervid satire and complaint.

Ezra Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, but lived much of his early life in Pennsylvania. He attended the University of Pennsylvania but was graduated from Hamilton College. Although he was the editor of "Des Imagistes", he withdrew himself from the group on the publication of the first Imagist Anthology, and for some years called himself a vorticist. Later his work developed in other directions. He lived many years in London, but his lack of sympathy with the trends of English poetry finally induced him to settle in Paris. Although he is separated from the United States by the Atlantic Ocean, his criticism and diatribes still reach American publications on occasion. Early a leader in the new movement of poetry, he has allowed his position to slip away, and his early promise as a poet to be somewhat dimmed by his poses and mannerisms.

"And yet there is a definite distinction in Pound's work. His painstaking study in collecting literatures has yielded him an accent, an attitude. He maintains a certain grace of bearing, even when he poses before the mirror of his art, draped in a coat of many cultures that he has constructed, patch by patch, from other and more original designers. He has really little to say, but he says that little in a manner that gives his words the tone of authority. It is not so much the phrases as his gestures that are distinguished and arresting. It is the wave of the hand that explains and identifies Pound. Some of his followers who are not so well-known have surpassed him in his own *métiers:* the Aldingtons are far more genuinely Hellenic and chiseled than he; T. S. Eliot has a much lighter

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

touch in recording the ironies and overtones of a conversation; John Gould Fletcher is a more daring experimenter in the clash of colors; Maxwell Bodenheim has a more delicate and dextrous imagination — but Pound triumphs in the gesture. He raises his arm, his fingers become nimble, his eyebrows go up — and what, when spoken, is tawdry and trivial, becomes glamorous with a suggestion of mystery. This is his power. The effect is that of a verbal legerdemain; the speech is mostly dumb-show, but he still simulates the magic of life. He is like Gordon Craig's supermarionette and his art is poetry in pantomime." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"His poems ['Lustra'] are too complicated for hasty judgment. One must read and read again a week later. They are ironical, jeering and intolerant. They are lonely, contemplative, searching, carefully formed and firmly living. Perhaps you hate Ezra Pound. He says many of us have the manner. Perhaps you like him, but whatever else you do you cannot ignore him. He has an individual fashion of saying things and he is without fear." — *K. B. in the Boston "Transcript", December 6, 1916.*

REFERENCES:

Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry. KNOPF.
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Ezra Pound and Poetry. W. Rice. DIAL, May 1, 1913.
The Work of Ezra Pound. Carl Sandburg. POETRY, February, 1916.
Ezra Pound, Poseur. Louis Untermeyer. NEW REPUBLIC, August 17, 1918.
The Reputation of Ezra Pound. May Sinclair. NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, May, 1920.

T. S. ELIOT

Poems. KNOPF.

From the obscure and difficult mazes of his poetry, there rise occasional pictures of great beauty, moments of superb satire and others of an almost clownish humor. It is a perverse talent, much discussed and difficult to understand. His more ardent admirers consider him a genius, and there is enough in his work so that his most ardent enemies can scarcely call him fool.

Still another of the expatriated Americans, T. S. Eliot has lived for some years now in England, where his criticism as well as his poetry has a hearing. The editors of "The Dial" last year awarded him their $2,000 prize for his long poem "The Waste-land", which was hailed by some critics as a brilliant achievement, by others as absurd; in fact, some suspected it of being a hoax, because of its obscure symbolism. Eliot was born at St. Louis, in 1888. He was graduated from Harvard, took a master's degree there, then later studied both at the Sorbonne and Oxford. His stay in England dates from 1913. I am inclined to think that those who find great art in him as a poet, sometimes miss the point of his satire and of his really rare sense of humor.

"At least two-thirds of Eliot's sixty-three pages ['Poems'] attain no higher eminence than extraordinarily clever — and eminently uncomfortable — verse. The exaltation which is the very breath of poetry — that combination of tenderness and toughness — is scarcely ever present in Eliot's lines. Scarcely ever, I reiterate, for a certain perverse exultation takes its place; an unearthly light without warmth which has the sparkle if not the strength of fire. It flickers mockingly through certain of the unrhymed pictures and shines with a bright pallor out of the two major poems." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The Freeman", June 30, 1920.*

REFERENCES:

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Modernists. Mary M. Colum. LITERARY REVIEW, January 6, 1923.
The Poetry of Drouth. Edmund Wilson, Jr. DIAL, December, 1922.
T. S. Eliot. Gilbert Seldes. NATION, December 6, 1922.

MAXWELL BODENHEIM

Advice. KNOPF.

Brittle, penetrating, filled with dry humor and biting satire, Bodenheim is the youngest of these three ironists, and perhaps the least given to a contemplation of beauty. He lets his satirical sense feel its way among personal and social problems. He is an introspective satirist. Vivid in his sense of drama, and of description, he records both events and people with faithfulness. If music is lacking in his verses, it is perhaps compensated for by adroitness.

Maxwell Bodenheim was born in Mississippi in 1892. He is wispish in appearance, with sharp features and sandy hair. His conversation is as biting as his poetry. A keen analytical mind and a contempt for the unintelligent make his reactions and ex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pressions fearless and rather terrifying. For three years he was an enlisted man in the army. He spent some years in Chicago, and is definitely associated with the group there. I have never known him to hesitate to criticize a man's work because that man was his friend. Both in his work and in his person, he seems afraid of friendliness. This is, in a sense, his strength. Uncompromisingly, he looks at life through a strong lens of ironical humor. American poetry has needed this note. Bodenheim is a sort of poetic Jonathan Swift, a twentieth century Pope turned democrat.

"His delicacies are daringly clear and his images are fresh without attempting the latest heresy. Bodenheim's sensitivity to words makes him especially expert in his use of the verbal nuance. . . . Bodenheim has no superior in the whimsical-grotesque." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"Mr. Bodenheim uses words in a cryptic, esoteric fashion, attaching to them meanings of his own, as though they were his private property and not the common possession of the race." — *Review of "Advice" in "The Athenaeum", November 5, 1920.*

"'Advice' is indubitably one of the important books of the year as it is one of the books most compact with beauty, actually worthy of frequent rereading. It is a book small only in size, for behind its lines tremble the multitudinous vibrations of a world of beauty and thought." — *Herbert S. Gorman in the New York "Times", December 26, 1920.*

"Mr. Bodenheim has proved himself a very capable artist. Once the reader is willing to lend a bit of sympathy to his theory there is much to enjoy in his poems ['Advice']. The clew to their virtues may be a little difficult to get, the harmony may seem discordant, the images a trifle confusing and fantastic but careful discernment will bring unity out of the picture, and with a vivid phase of imaginative suggestion." — *William Stanley Braithwaite in the Boston "Transcript", November 27, 1920.*

THE BURDEN

Translated from the Swedish of Marta af Sillen

By Charles Wharton Stork

SHE carried her water pitcher, —
From the well by the gate she bore it,
And high on her head she wore it.
— In the South 'tis a second nature. —
And her carriage was straight as that of a queen,
Though she was but crowned
With earthen pride,
And her motion the while was poised, serene,
As the calm when the sound
Of music has died.
But the way that she trod was a dusty way,
Her burden the weight of every day,
And her steps with their gliding grace
Won a humble guerdon;
Yet silent I watched her, and now I see
That no posture has more of majesty
Than theirs who, steady of pace,
Walk erect with a burden.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Three Spaniards

THREE centuries ago, the glory that was Spain either rested in or was made apparent by three writers: Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616), Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562-1635), and Pedro Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681). Cervantes — (seven cities and one town contested for the honor of having been his birthplace) — was a novelist; he was the author of "Don Quixote", which Carlyle termed "our joyfullest modern book". The work was so splendid that his dramas have been relegated to the dissecting rooms of university seminars. Lope de Vega was a dramatist; he wrote so many plays — some say 1,800 in all, though this number has never been placed on the shelves — that his novels have come to be used merely as reference material by specialists who write on him. Calderon was a dramatist too; less prolific than Lope de Vega by far, but so superior to him in talent that his plays constitute even to this day a vital part of the repertory of the classical stage. With Calderon the golden period of Spanish literature came to a close.

Today three other Spaniards hold the centre of the stage: Jacinto Benavente (1866—), Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (1867—), and Gregorio Martínez Sierra (1881—). Like Calderon and Lope de Vega, Benavente and Sierra were born in Madrid. Like Cervantes, Ibáñez is writing novels by which he hopes to cure Spain of its ills, such as illiteracy, excessive use of intoxicants, and too much mediæval bull fighting. Like Lope de Vega, Benavente and Sierra are marvelously prolific. Like Calderon, Benavente is supposed to be the last of the moderns. And just as the three Spaniards of Shakespeare's time were surrounded by a sizable group of other writers whose creations were in no way mean, so are the three of 1923 not without worthy rivals. But, thanks to the enterprise and discriminating foresight of three of our leading publishers, E. P. Dutton and Company, Charles Scribner's Sons, and Alfred A. Knopf, the writers here under discussion represent the best that Spain has to offer at present, not simply to us but to other countries in which translators are willing, and to her own native children just south of the Pyrenees.

To contend that Ibáñez, Benavente, and Sierra are the equals or the superiors or the inferiors of their immortal predecessors would be hopelessly idle: it would resemble the attempt to prove that greater heroism was displayed on the flagship of the Spanish Armada than fell to the honor of Admiral Sims's doughtiest capital ship in the recent contest with the Central Powers. Times have changed; and times make the man, particularly if that man be an Ibáñez, for the times make the press agents. Never in all his sixty-nine years did Cervantes have as many favorable remarks made about him as Johan Bojer alone made concerning Ibáñez in that unusual and initial number of the "Arena", published at Christiania in November of last year.

Bojer gave it as his opinion that Ibáñez is the most read novelist,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of any age, in the world at present; that no Spanish author after Cervantes has ever acquired anything like Ibáñez's popularity; that he is Spain's Zola and more; that he is the Don Quixote of the Republicans; that he learned more during the various periods of his imprisonment than many men learn in college; that he has and maintains one house in Madrid, another in Valencia, another in Paris, another in Cannes, another in New York, and an entire estate in Argentina, whereas if you wish to locate him you are likely to find him studying the oriental question in San Francisco or taking an automobile tour through Scotland; and that as a painter of a scene on the sea or an intense situation on land he is the world's master.

To refute this as excessive or to uphold it as the unvarnished truth is not my purpose. I cannot help wondering however what would have been the effect on Cervantes if someone had said this about him — in a language which he did not read — when he was but fifty years old. And what would have been the effect on Cervantes's "later works" had his publisher been able to follow the example of Dutton and consume so much of a page in listing the various editions that it is necessary to leap over a few numbers and inform the reader that this is the "180th Edition". Moreover, Cervantes lived in a powerful country. Modern Spain is small and weak: just a little larger than California in area and with a population of twenty million, only eight million of whom can read or write. How does Ibáñez hope to make his messages of blood and sand effective in the case of those of his fellow citizens who need them most?

But then Cervantes himself did not write, in Spanish, for a highly cultured public. And Ibáñez in one of his less heralded though, it seems to me, more important works, "The Cabin", touches on this very theme, in the person of Don Joaquín, the schoolmaster. It grieved the good man to see that his boys did not take well to Castilian pronunciation; that they did not regard his schoolhouse as a "temple, a torch that shines and dissolves the barbaric darkness". And there is an abundance of admirable admonition in this novel to the Spanish people to go to work. It is one thing to lead men away from the actually brutal arena; it is quite another to lead them out into the potentially fertile fields where they may work, and to the schoolhouses where they may learn to spell. If Spain comes back and through, Blasco Ibáñez will have had a part in the redemptive reconstruction.

And so will Jacinto Benavente, seven of whose plays are now made accessible to English readers. His American publishers have obliged, or permitted, his translator, John Garrett Underhill, to supply each volume with an introduction. This plan cannot be commended too highly. There may be a few readers who do not care who the author is, what he stands for, or where he came from. This type of person — it is to be hoped that he is lonely — should have the fact brought to his attention, by force if necessary, that intelligent reading is the only kind that counts, and that no reading is intelligent which is not based on and which does not start from appreciative familiarity with the author in question.

Mr. Underhill makes the point, in his introduction, that Señor Benavente has been "the most stimulating and compelling figure" in the redemption of modern Spain. It is not hard

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to believe this; for there is a wholesomeness about his plays that we in this country would look for in a Longfellow whom God had endowed with a sort of Mediterranean technique. There is that exquisite little thing in one act entitled "No Smoking". A blatant woman, bedizened with the cheapest of cheap jewelry, leaves the woman's compartment of a train to escape, she says, the cheap talk of its occupants. She betakes herself to a smoking compartment where there is a man. Still more talk, but this talk is agreeable. The train stops; the man gets off; he does not return to that compartment immediately; the kind mother and her type of daughter toss his luggage out the window onto the platform as the train departs. Then he returns.

Prejudice is always the child of ignorance. But a man may be kept ignorant and prejudiced by being made too well informed on certain subjects; on certain phases of a situation. There is the matter of Spain, her romantic landscapes and her many castles with their gardens. On these there is literally no end of books in the English language. The latest is Ernest Peixotto's "Through Spain and Portugal" (Scribner). It is a beautiful volume. To read it, or merely to look at its glorious illustrations, is enough to make any man abandon his work and go over there and see these sights while there is yet time. Mr. Peixotto actually speaks of "Edens" and "Paradises". It is the consumption of such works, admirable in themselves, that has led the average American into believing that no Spaniard would be capable of writing such a play as "No Smoking". It is too sensible.

The rest of Benavente's plays are equally unlike what we have heretofore been taught to expect from Spain. There is artificiality to be sure in "Princess Bebé", but it is not etched or colored; it is shown up in all its grim reality. Princess Helena says (Act II):

> It is idle to attempt to change ourselves when we continue in the same environment. The past, not the future, governs the world. Despised history tyrannizes over the lives of men as of nations. . . . Life is a forest many centuries old, and our souls are rooted in it like centenarian trees.

It is precisely this environment that Benavente has set out to change; it is this forest that he is rooting up. He is sowing in seed which, when grown, will furnish leisured travelers with less to write about but will change the "court" life of the Princess Bebés into the lives of the people that really "constitute a State", as Sir William Jones conceived a state even in the eighteenth century. But then he was not a Spaniard.

The same theme — the awakening of Spain — is treated in another of Benavente's plays, "The Bonds of Interest". The action takes place in an "imaginary country", at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the other three Spaniards were trying to put their country in the forefront of civilization. It discusses the good and the bad that is in any individual man, and therefore in any country.

The gist of the drama is contained in the remarks Crispin makes to Columbine (Act II):

> We have all within ourselves a great and splendid gentleman of lofty hopes and towering ideals . . . and by his side a humble servant born to forlorn hopes and miserable things . . . . The art of living is so to separate the two that when we fall into any ignominy we can say: It was not I, it was my servant.

There is much of Don Quixote-Sancho Panza in this, but let us not condemn

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Benavente for his reminiscences, conscious or unconscious. Let us rather felicitate him on his dramatic aptitude, and congratulate him on his inexpressed but handsomely symbolized unwillingness to set himself down as a hundred percent Spaniard. That he loves Spain is obvious in everything he writes; and he has already written nearly one hundred dramas. That he is aware of Spain's perfection no man can detect from the three volumes of plays Mr. Underhill has thus far translated, and Charles Scribner's Sons have thus far been good enough to publish.

All of this applies equally well to the two volumes of plays (Scribner) by Martínez Sierra, unless it be that Señor Sierra is a trifle more artistic and a trifle less caustic than his colleague. Though his "Poor John" has some of the two fisted humor of Benavente's "No Smoking", such a play as Sierra's "Cradle Song" takes us back to Lope de Vega's *autos*, except that Sierra, while not in the slightest degree radical or disrespectful, writes of convents and cowls with his tongue in his cheek. One illustration must suffice, apart from the Doctor, who is a most lovable "heretic". Sister Marcella has been accused of sticking her tongue out at Sister Inez. Here is her defense: "I stuck it out because there was a fly on the end of my nose, and since I had my arms out making the sign of the cross, I had to frighten him away with something." So long as that kind of line can be read in this kind of play — a foundling has been placed on the doorsteps of a convent, and the nuns take it in, bring it, or her, up, and give her a right royal wedding — Señor Ibáñez need not spend his entire life writing novels against what he feels are the corrupt practices of the Church in Spain.

Sixty years ago, George Ticknor wrote one of the greatest books with which American scholarship can be accredited, his "History of Spanish Literature", three volumes. In the second volume he devoted a special section to the question, "Why Cervantes wrote 'Don Quixote' ". After brushing away the cobwebs of closet spun theories he said, what everyone has known since he said it, that Cervantes wrote his "Don Quixote" for no other purpose than to give the death blow to those volumes on romance and chivalry which had become so numerous and noxious that sanity, to say nothing of real spiritual progress, was no longer possible. The three Spaniards before us are pursuing a different plan: they are writing constructive fiction; they are battering down the follies of tradition in Spanish life, and building up such realities as their countrymen must cling to if the pride that has long been theirs shall be justified in fact. That their books are finding such a wide clientele beyond their native borders is proof that Spain is not alone in her quest for an enlightened civilization.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

Notes From France

WHEN a man is surrounded by a legend, coming too near him is dangerous; your illusions are likely to suffer a partial collapse. I had been brought up (socially and literarily speaking) on the belief that Comte Robert de Montesquiou, who died last year, was not only a man of refined taste and of many artistic initiatives (which he was), and a unique representative of the ending nineteenth century, a sort of French Oscar Wilde,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a master of the *kakemono* and the *fanfreluche;* I had also been told (which I strongly question today) that he was the inspiring genius of a whole generation, that without him, Comtesse de Noailles, Marcel Proust, and Jean Cocteau would not have existed; that he supplied Huysmans with his leading character of Des Esseintes, other novelists and poets with their models — including the famous M. de Charlus from "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu". Now that Montesquiou's posthumous writings, under the title of "Les Pas Effacés", are being made public, now that much of the mystery surrounding him is becoming dispelled, none of what must have been his charm appears less fascinating to us, but we see little trace of what would have been his genius.

The 'nineties may acquire, for our descendants, the same prestige that the mid-Victorian season has for us today. But it will remain a fact that all the great artists of the prewar period were in violent reaction against that society, or professing toward it an indifference worse than hostility. Look at Anatole France, Mallarmé, Verhaeren, Jammes, Rolland, Gide, Cézanne, Gauguin, Franck, Debussy. . . . The divorce between genius and society would have been complete if it had not been for Marcel Proust; Montesquiou, whose worldly existence monopolized the best of his gifts, will not leave a very deep mark of his passage in literature, in art, even in interior decoration. I realize that the physical affectation, the extreme mannerism in the voice which we observe now in X, Y, and Z who are our leaders in fashion or in letters, were initiated by him. A perfect dandy he was — the last of them perhaps — and well suited to the brilliant list afforded by the nineteenth century: an intellectual dandy of course, contrasting with Brummell as does a salon with a carousel of the Guards. It is the historian of society, not the critic of literature, who will find profit in retracing, after the late Comte Robert, the "Pas Effacés" which lead back to no illuminating dialogue between wise people and their disciples, but to the chatter of many gentlemen and ladies, the same whom we judged so severely, and so rightly, when we were eight years old and they came for tea.

That epoch was a small one, that society a decaying one. When it is twilight, a man casts a shadow which is very much bigger than himself.

What assures me that I am not prejudiced, is my persistent admiration for a writer who is also a dandy and a connoisseur of that same epoch, but one who knows how to keep his distances, æsthetically speaking and not only socially. I mean Abel Hermant, the prolific novelist and satirist, who has begun the publication of his "Cycle de Lord Chelsea", following the more austere trilogy of "L'Aube Ardente", "La Journée Brève", and "Le Crépuscule Tragique". His latest work, like the "Mémoires de M. de Courpières", like the fantasies called "La Carrière" (about diplomacy), or "Les Transatlantiques" (about Franco-American society marriages), is not exactly the sort of thing to be recommended by débutantes to their mothers. Yet these books, even unexpurgated, never afford the risk of shocking the reader by a coarse expression, a brutal or imperfect wording; however thorny a situation may be, the author has always been careful to smooth a gentle path leading into the heart of it; the reader's comfort seems to be Abel Hermant's second dominant care, immediately after

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his own pleasure in telling the story — and even that pleasure is far from taking a selfish form. The style of these books is probably the most perfect to be found among story tellers of today. The French Academy has long shown its ill will against Abel Hermant, because of his cruel portraying of the upper social classes in "Courpières", "Le Cadet de Coutras", and especially "Les Grands Bourgeois"; yet it seems that the Academy, sooner or later, will open its doors to that man who respects nothing — except perhaps youth, innocence, and the laws of the French language.

The Academy was easier to persuade in favor of its newest member, Abbé Brémond, the author of a splendid, patiently built "Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux", a literary monument that will have its place in all the libraries already possessing William James's "The Varieties of Religious Experience", although the two works have little in common besides the noble character of their purpose, and the scholarly mastery of both authors.

The Catholic religion is certainly showing that it has kept virtue enough to inspire great writers of the literary vanguard. By the side of Jammes, of Claudel, now takes place Max Jacob, a pioneer of the newest forms, the author of "Filibuth, ou la Montre en Or", a masterpiece of accurate middle class psychology with large touches of mysticism, and with the rapidly disappearing Montmartre as a setting.

Another novel, by Alexandre Arnoux, whose fairy melodrama "Huon de Bordeaux" is being given—again at Montmartre — by the brave "Atelier" company of Charles Dullin. "Ecoute s'il Pleut" is the title. Will it seem less queer, if I tell you that it is the name of a village? In fact, several places in France actually bear that name, the origin of which is to be found in some old water mill, with its activity dependent upon the condition of the river: therefore the appellation "Listen if it's raining!" . . . Now I must add that in Arnoux's three clever stories there is no river, no mill, and no rain.

Three translations deserve a special notice, as they are likely to put new and refreshing material at the disposal of French writers, and the trace of their influence may be felt sooner or later. V. Llona has translated the very remarkable book (and very little known in America) by Ambrose Bierce called "In the Midst of Life", under the title of "Aux Limites de la Mort", which is a striking but not objectionable antithesis. Mr. P. Neel has translated Joseph Conrad's "Lord Jim", and Valéry Larbaud, with Mlle. Pomès, has translated under the heading of "Echantillons" (Samples) a choice of fragments by the Spanish author Ramón Gómez de la Serna. These "Samples" are creating almost as much of a sensation as did the first manifestations of Spanish music, when Albeniz, Granados, de Falla, Turina became known on this side of the Pyrenees. Larbaud tells us that Gómez de la Serna is only one among several exponents of a Spanish literary renascence. After a long eclipse, light may come again from the south, and various signs indicate that Paris is ready for such a new orientation.

Where literature meets contemporary history, Etienne Fournol inscribes his portraits of notorious Frenchmen of the political world, under the general title of "Le Nouveau Plutarque". The keenness, the forceful style and intermittent irony of this book place M. Fournol in the first

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rank of our *living* historians, making him something like a French Lytton Strachey. We hope that this book's fortune, if not equal to that of "Queen Victoria", will be such as to spread a more accurate knowledge of French public life and of French modern leaders.

I am less thoroughly confident of Jean de Pierrefeu and his "Plutarque a Menti", which now follows his well known "G.Q.G." I feel, in this book, a heavier touch of partizan spirit. The thesis of "Bergsonian" military plans, nefarious because intuition was to play the part of intelligence, is ingenious but hardly solid. I fear an excessive confusion of values here. Intelligence was not the monopoly of older military schools, to the exclusion of recent ones. And I do not see that in the real Bergsonian doctrine intuition opposes itself to intelligence. On the contrary, they are both opposed to a more mechanical process of cerebral activity, founded upon an accumulation of dead or readymade knowledge. I see how Bergsonism can be opposed to mechanical execution and to much of the older methods of the army. But on which side is intelligence? I see that the French staff in 1914 was composed of very old men who had read very little of M. Bergson (were they even touched by society Bergsonism?) and who had maintained the army in ridiculously obsolete uniforms, with many obsolete regulations and, very probably, obsolete ideas on tactics. But I do not admit that wherever intelligence is lacking, Bergsonism should necessarily be present. If some high chiefs, with all their patriotism, lacked both intelligence and intuition in 1914 — as history will probably decide they did — M. de Pierrefeu is not justified in making Bergsonism responsible. In trying to kill M. Bergson and Marshal Joffre with one single shot, he runs the risk of missing them both. But I do agree with him in his denunciation of the old prejudice according to which military qualities are above the realm of discussion and military genius should be of a mysterious essence, a gift of some unknown kind. If the new Pierrefeu book creates an atmosphere of intelligent discussion around the fundamental principles of military science, it will have done a real service to the army. We wish that someone would render the same service to diplomacy.

PIERRE DE LANUX

German Books in Striking Dress

THE Jakob Krause Bund, an important society of German bookbinders and bibliophiles, has just been holding a small exhibition of beautiful specimens of the bookbinder's delightful art. It was interesting to note, since the various exhibits were divided according to the towns of origin, that the work produced in Berlin, under the influence of the sober Prussian temperament, while fine in quality showed no particular originality but was satisfied with elaborate gold tooling on fine leather. The work from Stuttgart and Leipzig, on the contrary, showed many a bold innovation, strange designs imprinted upon leather of wildly bold and original tones. But the real inwardness of German book decoration is not to be found in these more or less conventional leather bound luxurious editions of classics.

Take, for instance, the books produced by the Deutsch-Meister Bund, Munich, a society founded with a purely nominal membership fee to promote

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the reading of the classics. It is proposed to achieve this laudable end by a careful choice of only such masterpieces as are eminently readable even for those to whom the story is everything, the manner nothing, and by a most alluring style of production. The books are all bound in boards, covered with tough, thick paper of various rich colors, and have cloth backs stamped in gold. Whether it be Buchner's famous "Death of Danton" in rich rose with pale triangles and blue cloth back, "Münchhausen", Immermann's famous "Oberhof" in large blue tartan with back in black and much gold, Reuter's "Franzosen-Tid" (Platt-Deutsch), the famous novel of the Napoleonic campaigns in Germany, with gay little naïve pictures in orange on white, or Annette Droste-Hülshoff's "The Jew's Beech", a grim little eighteen century murder story of Westphalian peasantry, in blue with knots and grains as of old timber — no man could imagine himself bored by such books. The ideal of the society is to keep these beautiful editions as cheap as possible, and they invite subscriptions to this end from sympathizers. Other books in the series are "Hochwald" by that sensitive stylist, Adalbert Stifter, and "Michael Kohlhaas", a novel by the poet-dramatist, Kleist.

Two numbers of monumental monthly magazines issued by the art publishing house of Seeman, Leipzig, are "Pictures from the Dresden State Gallery" in the series "The Galleries of Europe", and pictures by Courbet, Manet, Corinth, Van Gogh, and Rohlfs in the series "Masters of Color". The first series is devoted to old masters, the second to those of the nineteenth century and the present day. These are reproduced by color process and represent portfolios of lasting value, for an art critic of high standing writes each introductory article. The pictures are always chosen according to some logical plan. The price is comparatively low — four marks the basic price, multiplied by the "key number" of the Booksellers' Exchange. This is at the moment 2,500, so that such a number costs about thirty cents!

Lesser books of beauty are the "Fairy Tale Series" published by the Herz Verlag of Vienna. Oscar Wilde's fairy tales have been followed by a delightful edition of "The Cricket on the Hearth". The illustrations by Bartholomaus Stefferl are strongly grotesque, yet winning. Clarisse Meitner's translation preserves the spirit of Dickens to a praiseworthy degree. "Mynona's" grotesque-philosophic-romantic-erotic "Schöpfer" is published as one of "Die Schwarzen Bücher" by Kurt Wolff, Munich, with fantastically appropriate illustrations by Alfred Kubin, master of the bizarre and morbid.

The idea of tightening the contact between author and reader by printing facsimile manuscripts seems to be a success. The series of "Deutsche Dichter Handschriften" published by Lehmann, Dresden and ably edited by Dr. Hanns Martin Elster, has already reached a round dozen volumes. Each contains a long manuscript reproduced direct from the author's copy, the most interesting with whole sentences and paragraphs scored and blocked out again and again, as in the poems by Bőrries von Munchhausen. Others, like Wilhelm Raabe's and Walter von Molo's, are neatly transcribed. This is the more pity with von Molo, since his manuscript in its raw state is a particularly interesting evidence of the chips that fly in an author's workshop. Every volume is of large format

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and contains a portrait of the author, an autobiographical note, a critical note, and one long story, one act play, or the equivalent. It is intended to extend the series so as to provide a practically comprehensive collection of the manuscripts of German authors, and to include as many of the old masters as possible. The series at present includes Carl Hauptmann (particularly hard to decipher and reproduced in print at the end), Waldemar Bonsels, Clara Viebig, Thomas Mann, Gustav Frenssen, Stefan Zweig, Hermann Hesse — a catholic selection. The idea seems worth while for other countries.

Arno Holz's sixtieth birthday has brought a sudden wave of recognition from all over Germany to the apparently somewhat neglected and overlooked founder of the naturalist school in Germany, the wise and still fiery hearted grey lionhead who as a boy of twenty set a torch to crumbling cardboard romanticism with his passionately modern lyrics of the great city in the "Buch der Zeit". Gerhart Hauptmann and Johannes Schlaf are Holz's most distinguished disciples. In the case of Hauptmann popular success brought the follower the wider name denied to the pioneer. Holz, whose plays, such as "Traumulus", have had no little success, has never been satisfied to confine himself to one mode of writing. He climbs from stair to stair up the thorny and intricate way of his "theory of numbers", *Rhythmik* as opposed to *Metrik*, according to the laws of which his great epic work "Phantasus" is written. A brilliant and pitiless satirist, he cauterized the follies of the day in his strange, voluminous, enthralling lyric-dramatic epic, "The Tin Smithy".

The great day saw Holz's artistic poet's attic in Schöneberg, a Berlin suburb, flooded with visitors, letters, telegrams, flowers, bottles of wine; and soon his friends' rooms had to be requisitioned to store the spoils. President Ebert sent a message and an "Honorary Gift" of half a million marks. Most of the authors of Germany sent greetings, poems, gifts. Hundreds of friends crowded up the attic stairs at the top of a four story apartment house to shake the poet's aching hand. The fitting conclusion would be that this dynamic and above all, in a national sense, pacifistic poet should receive the Nobel Prize, for which seven-eighths of his German colleagues entitled to a vote have submitted his name. His own suburb of Schöneberg did him honor by a special recitation evening, in the monumental new terra cotta *Rathaus*, devoted to his work. In the corridor with its frescoes of landscapes in the Mark Brandenburg, the six sketches of the difficult, spiritual, handsome poet face by leading black and white artists for the "Book of Honor" were on view. The best likeness was undoubtedly the unpretending photograph. An auction for Holz's benefit, for which artists contributed original sketches and bibliophile friends duplicate copies of Holz rarities — such as early editions of "Phantasus" or of the Elizabethan-spirited "Love, Quaff and Feasting Songs" of the shepherd Daphnis — brought in several million marks. Gurlitt, the well known art publisher, is to issue a "Portfolio" in which the aforesaid sketches of Arno Holz, together with other drawings by leading artists, will appear, and the entire proceeds are to be devoted to the great sixty year old, who is being celebrated in congratulatory addresses from his brother poets as "the liberator of German poetry".

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

ON the publicity sheet of a publishing house is quoted Kathleen Norris, the novelist, who apparently made some remarks about how and how not to write. If it was an interview, Mrs. Norris may not have said these things. However, we quote:

"The way to begin to write is to begin to write," says Kathleen Norris in the New York "Sun". "If you want to write you can always find time. Anyone who will sit down and write for three years, two hours a day, will surely become a writer.

"Do not be touchy about your stories being refused, coming back twenty times or more. If necessary, get someone to do your marketing for you, lay out a list of magazines or publishers, and go through them all, and then begin over again. Some rejections have their explanation in the fact that a magazine has its monthly appropriation exhausted. Even the material factor of the reader's digestion may be back of the rejection slip, so try again. Don't fall in love with your first brain product; make up your mind that the seventeenth is going to be a great story.

"People are always criticizing what they call the bosh published in magazines," said Mrs. Norris. "But this is merely additional proof that the thing that gets across is persistency more than pure worth. People who could and do write well must also learn that perseverance is what markets an article. The superficiality of style of the amateur may be successful for a while, but only continued effort has a lasting award."

Now what Mrs. Norris says about editors and magazines may very well be true; but the statement that "anyone who will sit down and write for three years, two hours a day, will surely become a writer", is obviously absurd. Too many persons believe this to be true. Thousands of persons might sit down and write five hours *twice* a day and never be writers. We do not believe that successful writing is a gift. Too many successful writers have no gift. But, surely, there are qualifications for successful writing other than perseverance. You cannot write criticism, for example, if you have no critical faculty. We have had pupils in our classes who simply could not view a book without emotion, either passionate enthusiasm or equally passionate hate. You cannot write fiction unless you have at least a spark of imagination, even if you *do* get most of your plots from newspaper headlines. You cannot be a good reporter, unless you have some ability for telling accurately the things you see and hear — and so on and so on. Moreover, there are some people who cannot learn to put one word after another so as to form a readable sentence. Writing is not so much a business as all that. Mrs. Norris, surely, knows that fact, and is not responsible for the statement. However, it wasn't a very wise statement, whoever made it.

A member of that very exclusive London society, the Crimes Club, took us with him the other night to hear the reading of a highly ingenious paper on a recent notorious trial, that of Bywaters and Mrs. Thompson, by Filson Young, editor of "The Saturday Review". It is, we are told, a great privilege for anyone to attend one of these occasions, held at the Savoy Hotel in the Strand, for the Crimes Club is limited to sixty members. Among our fellow guests were Prince Henry and Lord Lascelles, the husband of Princess Mary. The membership roll includes many peers, judges, and King's Counsel, but we were mainly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interested to note that the number of literary men has decreased considerably since the day when George K. Sims, E. W. Hornung, the two Irvings, Laurence and H. B., and Churton Collins were leading lights. Of those at present on the list we found only Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, W. B. Maxwell, Max Pemberton, and Eveleigh Nash, the publisher. We often wonder what it is that attracts bookish folk to this grim form of recreation. Surely the depressing example of Churton Collins, whose bouts of melancholia were thought by many people to have had something to do with his strange death in 1908 (he was found drowned in a pit), has shown that the worst possible form of relaxation for imaginative brain workers is to tax their minds still further with the grisly proceedings of institutions like the "Murder Club", as the Crimes Club is familiarly called. Churton Collins's son described it in the memoir of his father as "most exclusive, with its secrets as well as its aims and scope jealously guarded by its members". Still, every man to his taste.

From Agnes Ware Bishop comes the following note from which, on this beautiful though slightly cool summer day, we are forced to draw moral conclusions.

Alabama writers, with the help of the President of Alabama College located in the beautiful little mining town of Montevallo, the home of Montevallo coal, are planning a Writers' Conclave to be held on September 3 and lasting through five days. The expense will be nominal and the inspiration widespreading.

An informal program consisting of round tables, constructive criticism, and meetings for real help, is now being outlined.

All members of writers' clubs will be expected and writers who are not members of any club will be invited.

The only bar to admittance to this delightful Conclave will be a chip on the shoulder or an ax to grind.

If writers with chips on their shoulders or axes to grind are not admitted, Mrs. Bishop, unless Alabama is a most unusual place you will have no attendance at all, at all, at your "delightful Conclave". The tremendous ego which lurks in almost anyone who writes is quite right and proper; but it is difficult to handle. No matter how modest an author may seem on the surface, this is only a cloak to conceal his or her enormous conceit. We know. We have recently been writing a series of portraits of authors. They were, in the main, complimentary; but each one contained some attempt at fair estimate of the author's work. We selected most of these writers because they were our friends, because we admired their work. Not one of them was pleased. We have lost them as friends. All that we have left is our admiration of their work. So beware, Alabama writers. Do not trust too much in the beauties of human nature.

We hereby announce that no person can win the Gossip Shop review contest more than twice. This announcement is occasioned by the fact that Helen Kestner Atwood of New Haven, Connecticut, has again been successful. We refrain from printing the review, as it is once more about Robert Simon's "Our Little Girl". We are looking forward next month to a large grist of these criticisms of reviews. They should be 250 words in length, or *less*. The prize will be a copy of Ernest Bramah's "Kai Lung's Golden Hours". Anent prizes, the Poetry Club of Southern Methodist University, whose prizes to American undergraduates have recently been awarded, has issued a pamphlet containing some of the poems. We were particularly interested because "Babel", to which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

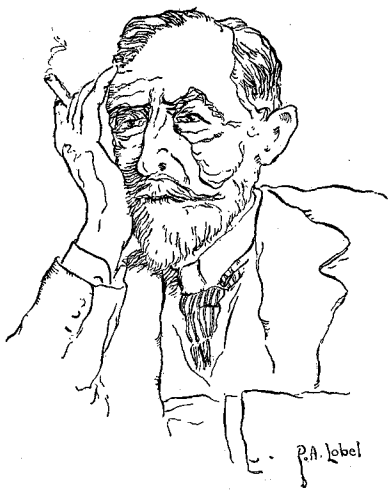
was awarded the first prize, was written by Roberta T. Swartz, an undergraduate at Mount Holyoke College from whom we accepted a poem some months ago. In fact, we think that we read "Babel" before a log fire at the famous university last winter, and thoroughly approved. We cannot quote the whole poem; but the first three verses show, we think, an interesting quality for one so young (Miss Swartz, by the way, is from Brooklyn).

With clay I shaped my yellow bricks
One after another,
We laid our bricks in the sun to burn,
I, and my brother.

We knelt and labored with the rest
In the hot weather;
From music-lacking toil we made
A song together.

The words we smoothed as clay to fit.
We built and sang.
The others listened — envied, — learned,
Till the plain rang.

Of Joseph Conrad, many have written at some length. His personality has been discussed and described. He has been surrounded by protective friends. That he is not so shy as he has been made to seem, is apparent from the fact that he had a fine time when he visited Yale University and found himself among unaffected undergraduates and interested professors. That he is puzzled by American hero worship, we do not doubt; that he is annoyed by it, we do not believe. As we saw him, he was a nice gentleman, with a slightly Polish accent, much disturbed at the variety of questions being tossed to him by so curious a collection of reporters that it included suave Arthur Maurice of the New York "Herald", several representatives of syndicates, a sob sister of the New York "Evening Journal", a determined literary editor from Jersey, someone from "The Christian Science Monitor", young John V. A. Weaver, etc. It was a situation from which the most hardened might well



Joseph Conrad

shrink. We were all drinking tea and between sips attempting to probe the soul of the author of "Youth". Rather a disturbing performance. Conrad, we thought, rose magnificently to the occasion. There was sheer nobility in his gesture, an angry one, when he dismissed an elaborate and ill advised question of technique with a fist brought to the table, and the statement that he knew nothing of analysis of style. "I write to please myself", he said, "and I hope that there are others like myself to read and to be pleased." When the women had left the room Conrad, we imagine, was himself, laughing, telling of his present method of writing, interested in Mr. Doubleday's proposition that someone guess at what point Conrad left off writing "The Rover" and where he picked it up ten years later. Conrad, it seems, now dictates his novels; and writes and rewrites on the typescript so greatly that sometimes not more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than a sentence a page of the original dictation remains. He says that if he sits at a typewriter himself he wastes too much time in the choice of the individual word.

Memories of school days in which we raised a courageous treble to carol, "Where the fo-our leaf clo-o-vers grow", came back to us as we read Fred Lockley's account of the author of that lyric.

One of the poets who has won fame and honor for herself and attracted much favorable attention to the Oregon Country is Ella Higginson, now a resident of Bellingham, Washington. Her maiden name was Ella Rhodes. Ella Rhodes was born in Council Grove, Kansas. While she was still a tiny tot, her parents bought a team and a prairie schooner and headed westward. For more than six months they followed the course of the setting sun till they reached the fertile and beautiful Grand Ronde Valley in eastern Oregon. Here with the snowclad peaks of the Blue Mountains ever in sight Ella Rhodes spent the early part of her girlhood. From Grand Ronde Valley the family moved to Oregon City, one of the historical cities of the west located near the falls of the Willamette River.

She attended the public school at Oregon City and her sister, Carrie Blake Morgan, who had attended St. Mary's Convent in Portland, acted as ex-officio teacher at home. During her girlhood she wrote some verse and several stories, but her well meaning friends made so much fun of her products that she abandoned all literary effort. She was a part of the west. She was too close to it to see its romance and charm.

After her marriage to Russell C. Higginson she went east. Returning from the east to Puget Sound, she was struck with the rich mine of literary material at her very door. "McClure's Magazine" offered a $500 prize for the best short story. She wrote a story entitled "The Takin' In of Old Mis' Lane", which proved to be the prize-winner. That same year "Collier's" offered a $500 prize for the best story submitted and she won it with "The Message of Anne Laura Sweet".

Her first book was a collection of her poems entitled "A Bunch of Western Clover". It was published by a local printing firm at Whatcom, Washington. This was in 1896. Mrs. Higginson has been a prolific writer of poems and stories, many of which first saw the light of day in "The Pacific Monthly" published at Portland, and in "The Sunset Magazine" of San Francisco.

Her best known books of short stories are "The Flower that Grew in the Sand", "From the Land of the Snow Pearls", and "A Forest Orchid". Her best known collections of verse are "When the Birds Go North Again", "The Voice of April-Land", and "The Vanishing Race". She has also written a novel entitled, "Mariella, of Out-West", the scene of which is laid in the Puget Sound Country and the characters of which are early pioneers of Washington Territory.

Probably her most quoted poem is the "Four-Leaf Clover", though her poem "When the Birds Go North Again" is a close rival to it in popularity.

The exhibition of American sculpture in the gardens of the Numismatic Society on upper Broadway, New York City, is proving to be not only unique among exhibitions but crowded with visitors, which is far more important. The luxurious catalogue is actually a triumph of printing, as the exhibit is a thing of great beauty. To an amateur it will prove an awakening to the importance of American sculpture. Frankly, as an amateur who once spent hours modeling Venuses and what nots in plasticine, we liked best the following: George Grey Barnard's colossal and dignified "Head of Lincoln", "Fragment from Fountain of Time" by Lorado Taft, and "The Joy of Life" by Leonard Craske. However, surely no words can describe adequately this display of form and grace. We suspect that our thanks are due to Archer M. Huntington, and his bride, for the plan and its execution. Here is patronage of art with a vengeance!

Somerset Maugham was again in America for a short stay. We have heard much of him, but have never met him. Jury duty kept us from a luncheon engagement—we missed him again. Hugh Walpole, however, tells us that Maugham is thoroughly amusing. Mr. Walpole, by the way, back

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from a trip of 180 lectures, relates that he has expended quite all his lecture profits in his new hobby of etchings. To return to Mr. Maugham: he went to see "Rain" while in New York, and wrote an enlightening piece for the New York "Herald", part of which we take the liberty of quoting:

> As the play unrolled itself I was delighted to see how closely he [John Colton] had stuck to the story, and how ingeniously he had developed what, owing to the medium in which I had written it, had only been suggested. There are some scenes, for instance the love scene between Miss Thompson and O'Hara, which are due entirely to the invention of John Colton; and in my humble judgment they show a real dramatic gift. But this is shown most clearly in an omission. I am told that a manager who read the play and should have known better found fault that the *scène à faire*, namely the scene in which the missionary goes into Sadie's room, was left out. I think a lot of nonsense has been talked about the *scène à faire*. Dramatically, it is often much more effective to leave it to the imagination of the audience. There is an excellent example of this in J. M. Barrie's "Mary Rose". Barrie's charm has blinded many people to the fact that he possesses a very great knowledge of the technic of the drama.

H. M. Bateman, the English cartoonist, famous for his "Punch" drawings, has recently been wandering about New York. One sees him here and there, his small eyes twinkling with the caricaturist's evil gleam. Yet, caricaturists are, as a rule, genial creatures, witness Al Frueh and our own harmless Gropper, to say nothing of Chicago's Gene Markey (a remarkably inoffensive young man). Of this type is Bateman, small, slight, wiry. Somewhere, he saw Lawton Mackall, who is editor of that hybrid publication "Snappy Stories" and whose "Bizarre" has appealed to some as a book of humor. Mr. Mackall is here shown in solemn mood. Mary Roberts Rinehart tells us that we recently made an error when we said that she as a girl took up nursing because she "was forced to earn her living". The first money she ever earned, it seems, was for a short story — the sum was thirty-four dollars. John Drury, formerly of Marshall Field's book store in Chicago, whose verses have been seen here and there in the magazines, passed through town not long ago on his way to sea. He decided that literature needed salting, so he hired himself out as a seaman and has disappeared for a time. We envy him. Harrison Rhodes, recovered from his serious illness, has gone to Italy for the summer, and is working on a new

Lawton Mackall

play. Barton Currie, the pleasant editor of "The Ladies' Home Journal", has returned from Europe, where he met many authors and enjoyed most of them. Herbert Gorman, the poet-critic, has deserted New York and will spend the summer months at the MacDowell Colony in Peterboro. Dorothy Speare, finished for the time being with her operatic ventures in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Italy, will be in New York City when her new novel is published. George Jean Nathan tells us that the first play he ever reviewed in New York City was "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" — we think he said it was on Fourteenth Street ten years ago, or maybe Tenth Street, fourteen years ago. At any rate he said that he was then getting fifteen dollars a week — he is at present seeing a few plays on the continent. He remarked that we seemed to enjoy everything. To which we reply, "Thank heaven for that!"

Gracious, what a place Healdsburg, California, must be! Here it is, according to Ada Kyle Lynch:

Healdsburg, May 17.—Thursday, May 17, saw the opening of the Luther Burbank Golden Jubilee. Flags, pennants, decorations, flowers; thousands of children in gay festive costumes, music, people; Santa Rosa in gala day dress, and a frail man with a look of spiritual aloofness, mingled with a pleased embarrassment difficult to describe, lending himself with thoughtful willingness to the wish of the people who met "to do him honor".

Did ever a man receive greater homage? Messages of congratulation from all over the world! A pleased and happy people meeting to show their regard for the great horticulturist while he is yet among them. No monument erected after death could be so splendid as this surging crowd of young and old and middle aged, telling with music and cheers, and song and story, of the wonders accomplished by persistent and insistent application to early ambition, to make perfect fruit and flower.

Ella Sterling Mighels of San Francisco, author of "Literary California", is coming to Healdsburg in a few days, to be the guest of Anita Fitch Grant. A friendship of many years' standing exists between the ladies, and both are conversant of interesting "early days". Mrs. Mighels divides literary Californians into two classes: "those who were born in California, and those who were reborn here."

Ad Shuster, well known writer of syndicated short stories, is editorial writer for the Oakland "Daily Tribune". Mr. Shuster recently admitted poems on the editorial page. The deluge which reached the editorial desk included over a hundred on "Mother's Day". The paper has gone back to its former uneventful policy.

The new consolidated "Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine", which made its initial appearance in May, contains a poem by Laura Bell Everett, member of the California Writers' Club, and your correspondent from Berkeley. Fearing her modesty would prevent her writing of it, I hereby announce the fact.

The first night of "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" was gala indeed. The customary Drew box — with John Drew and Ethel Barrymore smiling graciously. Somehow we remember few others, perhaps because everyone was either in the cast or playing near by in "The Rivals". Margaret Severn recently gave a Sunday evening dance recital. We liked best her "Earth Sprite", a dance in which she showed great fervor and abandon. Her gavotte, "Priscilla", was dainty. Her famous Benda masque dances, somehow, seem not to have been benefited by a year in vaudeville. Miss Severn is at her best in the dramatic dance, where her superb technique combines with a growing sense of effect and of the conveying of emotions.

Anna Katharine Green's renewed success with "The Step on the Stair" is most gratifying to those who read "The Leavenworth Case" twenty-five years ago. We met her on her last trip to New York City and found her a delightful lady, with no old-fashioned ideas and a deal of wit. She says that when anyone tells her that he has "read her book at one sitting — couldn't let it alone", she always feels a little disappointed. "When *I* like a book", she says, "I like to take my time over it." She lives in our favorite American city, Buffalo (excepting always our home town, supposed to be the most beautiful city in the world). She says that her hus-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

band is her "best friend and severest critic". After all, when we find a mate — We are looking for one who fulfils a requirement just as obvious as that — just that, as a matter of fact.

April should, if one relies upon tradition, be a month of poets and for poetry. The April magazines, however, show scant treasure. We have a theory that springtime is the time for experience rather than writing. Don't you suppose that spring poems are written, most of them, in retrospect as their authors sit comfortably before a winter fire? We liked "A Young Boy" by Jessica Nelson North in "Poetry", "Old Lace" by Karle Wilson Baker in "The Double Dealer", "Definitions" by Maxwell Bodenheim in "The Reviewer", and "To an Indolent Woman" by Hazel Hall in "The New Republic".

Sir William Robertson Nicoll was a very great journalist, he was a great editor, a distinguished theologian, and a notable personality. His death will be a real loss to English journalism and letters. He was not only a "bookman" in the highest meaning of the term, but a fighter for liberal principles, both in religion and literature. He founded "The British Weekly" which he edited at the time of his death. He created the unusual popularity of "The Bookman" of London, and edited other journals besides. He was a brilliant editorial writer. Of deep religious faith, he was always broadminded in his approach to a problem. A man of dignity and breadth, of poise and understanding — truly, an editor to be admired, and whose memory can well serve as an example. Emerson Hough, at the height of his renewed popularity, has been lost to America. His "The Covered Wagon" possessed a remarkable pictorial quality, as is evidenced from the motion picture. His last story, "North of 36", has been appearing serially in "The Saturday Evening Post" where it has met with extraordinary success. A gentle old man, with unusual vigor for his age, was Mr. Hough when we saw him last. A man who greatly admired Theodore Roosevelt and possessed many of that great American's rugged qualities. "N. P. D.", Mrs. Allan Dawson, literary critic of the New York "Globe", died very suddenly. She was a brisk, witty woman. Her pen was often biting, yet her columns had a variety and an interest that will be sadly missed.

Reprinted from "A Child's Day"

The new edition of "A Child's Day" by Walter de la Mare reminds us that Edna Holtorf, one of our students, recently wrote a rhymed review of "Memoirs of a Midget" beginning:

This lady was so smallish
That all else to her seemed tallish,
She even feared the Cat sometime
would her demolish,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For one day the Cat mistook her
And almost grabbed and took her
To a basket full of kittens, there to
permanently book her.

We were amazed to find how much beauty and personality a photograph can express. At the International Exhibition at the Art Centre, New York City, it was interesting to note in what simple and familiar things the skilful can discern a subject. Tugs and smokestacks and murky canals; shadows of an elevated track on the street beneath, or leaf shadows on a wall. "Dump Carts at Prayer" showed two-wheeled wagons standing on end under a railroad arch; a design was made from a bread board, a knife, a slice of cheese, and two saltines. Upstairs was an interior decoration exhibit, hangings, linens, hand decorated pottery. Even one who has eaten breakfast daily for many years and has tired desperately of so doing, would welcome it served on some of those joyous, giddy plates. Knoedler's showed pictures of Venice by old and modern masters (we liked the idea rather better than we did the paintings — it should be done for other cities), some etchings, with rich dark tones, by D. Y. Cameron, and Daniel Chester French's new statue. The much discussed art gallery in the Grand Central Station is well worth a visit. The pictures are both likable and good. Some of the best American sculptors are represented. Their work is chiefly in a cheerful, glass roofed room that has an entrancing fountain, blue tiled and pink fished, with a figure by Malvina Hoffman as its centre.

In one day, not long ago, we were fortunate enough to witness two unusual and somewhat dissimilar contests. In the afternoon at the huge new Yankee Stadium, for the benefit of the Free Milk Fund, Mr. Floyd Johnson was properly subdued by Mr. Jess Willard in a fistic contest which left much to be desired. However, the South American fighter, Luis Firpo, whose wide innocent eyes and immobile face are a startling contrast to his agile and powerful frame, was well worth watching as he knocked out Mr. Jack McAuliffe. Around and about us were Neysa McMein, the painter, Tex Rickard, Heywood Broun, Mrs. Herbert Swope and young son, William A. Brady, and one or two others. The same evening we saw the East-West Players of Manhattan win the David Belasco Trophy offered for the best production in the Little Theatre Tournament conducted with the cooperation of the New York Drama League. This tournament had been progressing for an entire week at the Nora Bayes Theatre. We did not witness the earlier stages; but certainly this last evening, when three contenders for the cup presented themselves, was in no sense dull. The prizewinners undertook a Russian tragedy, "The Little Stone House", by George Calderon. As directed by Gustav Blum, the play was really a little masterpiece, ably acted, particularly by Regina Sadokerski as the mother. Lionel Atwill, presenting the Trophy, was graceful as always, and Earl Carroll, offering as an additional prize a year's engagement in his Afternoon Theatre for next year, made his old impression of shyness and youth. (We suspect people who make this impression of being neither shy nor young.) This experiment proved so very successful that it is hoped it will continue from year to year. Numbers of entries, we understand, have already been received for next year's tournament.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED